



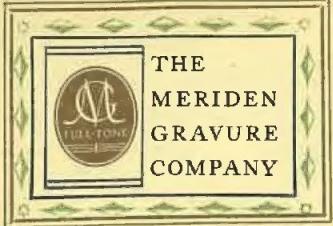
The Book of Counsel: The Popol Vuh of the Quiche Maya of Guatemala

Munro S. Edmonson

Publication 35

*Middle American Research Institute
Tulane University*

*New Orleans
1971*



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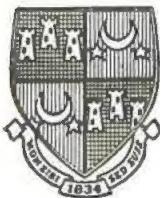
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1977



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Introduction

THE MANUSCRIPT OF UTATLAN. The original manuscript of the Popol Vuh, referred to at some points of our text, was almost certainly a hieroglyphic codex, or perhaps several of them. Whether and to what degree the present work was directly taken from this pre-Columbian document is and must remain, however, uncertain. The mythology and traditional history of the Quiche were also preserved in oral form, and were often recited on ceremonial occasions, and although the written work was the authority behind these recitations, it is not at all clear how faithfully it was followed. It is unclear, then, how much of the present text may have been represented in the hieroglyphic form.

The original book certainly included a section on divination, similar perhaps to the extant Yucatecan codices. Though these were not transcribed in the present text, they are alluded to in lines 8141 ff. It must also have included sections for which the extant codices provide no identified analogue—sections on the cosmology and history of the Quiche. The very first and very last lines of the text allude to these.

References to the pre-Columbian book use the expression "Popol Vuh," but there are also references to '*oher tzih*', literally 'former words,' which could of course mean either oral or written traditions. The book was held to be very ancient. It was among the gifts of the legendary lord Quetzalcoatl to the second generation of men, and it was referred to in that context (line 7315) as "the Tula scripture (*u tz'ibal Tulan*)."¹ Whether the author of the text that has come down to us had this scripture before him is doubtful; he describes it as "already lost (*zachinak chik*)" in line 8582 (though the verb may also mean 'destroyed' or 'forgotten'), and a little more ambiguously asserts in lines 48-49 "there is no longer a sight of it (*ma ha bi chik ilobal r e*)."

It seems very likely, then, that the author of the present text was recording an oral narrative which he or someone else had read previously from a glyptic manuscript, now lost. At some points he seems to have consulted the manuscript or at least remembered it very clearly, commenting apparently on its obscurity or clarity (see note to line 53). At other points he seems to decide to repeat or elaborate pas-

sages in a way which a written text might well have presented more formally: "and now we shall tell . . ."

circa 1550

THE MANUSCRIPT OF QUICHE. The original of the present text was written in Santa Cruz Quiche sometime around 1550-55. Its author was a member of the leading lineage of the Quiche, the Kavek lineage, as we can tell from the version he gives of the lineage history. This version corresponds closely to that of the Lineage of the Lords of Totonicapan, the only other extant Kavek document (which is preserved, however, only in Spanish translation), but is at variance with comparable traditions of the Great-House (*Ni-Hayib*) and Branches (*Tam*) lineages, at least in many particulars. The author's name is unknown though there has been speculation that it may have been Diego Reynoso, councilman (*popol vinaq*) and son of 10 Incense, who identifies himself as the author of the Totonicapan history. He was in any case almost certainly a *chahal* 'guardian' of the sort trained by the early missionary priests to write religious literature, sermons, and so forth in Quiche. At the time the manuscript was written, the missionary effort was obviously already successful in Santa Cruz Quiche. This must have been substantially after the first missionaries arrived in Guatemala in the early 1540s. Since the text of the Popol Vuh uses (albeit sparingly) the special letters invented for glottalized consonants by the Franciscan Father De la Parra in 1545, the composition of the text cannot be earlier than that date (Villacorta, 1936, p. 67). It must have been written before the death of Don Juan Cortés, who became *Ah Pop Q'am Haa* in 1524 and whose name reappears in most documents of the period but who is missing and presumed dead by 1558, when he fails to show up in the Title of Izcuin. (Recinos, 1957.)

1701-1703

THE MANUSCRIPT OF CHICHICASTENANGO. The Manuscript of Quiche has been lost. It still existed in the early 18th century, when it was found at Chichicastenango, copied and translated by the Dominican father who was parish priest there in 1701-03, Francisco Ximénez. Although the term has a broader and vaguer currency among students of the Popol Vuh, we may appropriately call this copy by

Ximénez himself the Manuscript of Chichicastenango. Ximénez added it to the text of his *Arte de Tres Lenguas: Cakchiquel, Quiche y Tzutuhil*, following it with escolios, or explanatory notes, interpreting the text.

Although we cannot be certain, it may well have been Ximénez' own copy which was seen in the Convent of Santo Domingo in 1794 by Pablo Félix Cabrera, who mentions it in his *Teatro Crítico Americano*. With the closing of the convents in 1829 the Manuscript of Chichicastenango then passed to the library of the University of San Carlos of Guatemala, together with other works of Ximénez. It was still there in 1855, when it was examined by Scherzer and Brasseur de Bourbourg, after which it disappeared from history.

THE MANUSCRIPT OF SAN CARLOS. Ximénez' other works at the library of the university have introduced a considerable confusion into the critical literature on the Popol Vuh. Ximénez had written a loose paraphrase of the Indian document for his *Historia de la Provincia de San Vicente de Chiapa y Guatemala*. It was this paraphrase that was seen by Ramón de Ordóñez y Aguiar in the late 18th century and that he mentions in his *Historia de la Creación del Cielo y de la Tierra*. It is also the paraphrase which was copied by Juan Gavarrete in 1845 and apparently again in 1847. (One of Gavarrete's copies became part of Brasseur's collection and has since been lost; the other was taken to Germany by Walter Lehmann in 1909 and is now—or was in 1947—in the Biblioteca Latinoamericana in Berlin.)

The Manuscript of Chichicastenango was also copied by Gavarrete, and the copy was apparently the basis of Carl Scherzer's published version of Ximénez' Spanish translation and the escolios in 1857. For clarity we may designate this copy by Gavarrete as the Manuscript of San Carlos. Its whereabouts have been unknown since Scherzer's work appeared. Except possibly for Gavarrete, Brasseur was the last scholar to be able to compare the Manuscript of Chichicastenango with that of Rabinal. It seems likely in fact that he took both of them back to Paris with him. We may assume therefore that his remark (1857, 1: lxxxii) that "... there were formerly in Guatemala three copies . . ." refers to what I am calling the manuscripts of Chichicastenango, San Carlos, and Rabinal.

THE MANUSCRIPT OF RABINAL. Fortunately the whole *Arte*, together with the text and translation

of the Popol Vuh and the escolios was recopied (in more than one hand) in the early 18th century. The copy passed into the possession of E. Chávez in Rabinal, who added a praise of the Dominican order in Spanish, his name, and the date: August 14, [17] 34. It is this Manuscript of Rabinal which has come down to us. Eventually it came into the hands of a Rabinal Indian collector of old documents, Ignacio Coloche, from whom Brasseur de Bourbourg obtained it in 1855, taking it back to Paris as part of his Bibliothèque Mexico-Guatémaliense. On Brasseur's death in 1874 his library was bought by Alphonse Pinart, and his collection was later sold at auction by Emil Paul et Fils and Guillemin. Eventually purchased by Edward A. Ayer, it is now in the Newberry Library in Chicago, where it was rediscovered for science by Walter Lehmann in 1928. Although the Rabinal manuscript is not Ximénez' own copy, as Brasseur and Gavarrete believed it to be, it is clearly the most authoritative version we have left. It is cited in my notes as The Manuscript (MS). This reconstruction of the history of the manuscript is the work of many scholars, but principally of Schultze-Jena and Recinos.

THE TEXT. The Quiche text of the Popol Vuh has been published five times: by Brasseur de Bourbourg (1861), presumably on the basis of the manuscripts of Rabinal and Chichicastenango; by Villacorta and Rodas (1927), who could consult neither manuscript but relied on Bourbourg's published text; by Schultze-Jena (1944), Burgess and Xec (1955), and Villacorta (1962). The last three worked from the Manuscript of Rabinal now in Chicago. No one of the published texts may be taken as definitive. Brasseur does not accurately record the occasional special letters indicating glottalization. Schultze-Jena, who does, and whose text is much the most careful, could not examine the Manuscript of Chichicastenango. Burgess and Xec have attempted something close to a phonemic reading in modern Quiche, and have thus the advantage of a modern Indian rendering of the ambiguous text. The Villacorta and Rodas text was "phoneticized" in the hope of permitting modern Indians to read it. The more recent one by Villacorta is a reading of the text of the Rabinal manuscript somewhat less accurate than Schultze-Jena's. My own text is another attempt at phonemic clarity, but I have tried to note my disagreements with previous texts and with the manuscript.

The reading of the text is only occasionally diffi-

D Falta en esta lista la revisión de Ximénez, que él mismo incluyó en su Historia de la Provincia de San Vicente de Chiapa y Guatemala (1722?)
Una copia a cargo de Juan Gavarrete (fijo de Justo. 6.)
Introduction aparece en 1847, y en 1929, José Antonio Villacorta publica la

cult. With minor exceptions the disagreement among readers is a matter of single letters (a-o, c-e, b-h, l-t, r-x being the most problematic pairs). Although it is clearly written, its accuracy is open to serious question. Omissions are common, and the one 20-line passage which happens to have been copied twice suggests that as many as a quarter of the lines may contain errors of the copyist! (See note to line 1275.) After all the versions are compared it is notable that the discrepancies are startlingly minor. We are left to suppose that the differences between the Manuscript of Rabinal and the lost Chichicastenango version were probably unimportant, that both presented serious problems to the reader, but primarily in relation to one letter at a time.

TRANSLATIONS. The Popol Vuh has been translated more or less directly from Quiche eleven times. An approximate outline of these translations and their derivatives is given below. The abbreviations are those used in my footnotes. *Scherzer se basa en*

- FX: Ximénez, 1703? (Spanish.)
Scherzer, 1857, 1926. (Spanish.)
Justo Gavarrete, 1872-73, 1894-96, 1919-21. (Spanish.)
BB: Brasseur de Bourbourg, 1861. (French.)
Barberena, 1905, 1906-07, 1923, 1944-46.
(Spanish.)
Guthrie, 1906. (English.)
Spence, 1908. (English.)
Balmont, 1910. (Russian.)
Anonymous, 1926. (Spanish.)
Krickeberg, 1928. (German.)
Claassen, 1933. (German; partial.)
Capdevila, 1938a, 1938b. (Spanish.)
Abreu Gómez, 1944. (Spanish; abridged.)
Abreu Gómez, 1949. (Spanish; literary interpretation.)
NP: Pohoriles, 1913. (German.)
GR: Raynaud, 1925. (French.)
Asturias and González, 1927, 1939, 1950.
(Spanish.)
Anonymous, 1929-31. (Spanish.)
Baudizzone, 1944-46. (Spanish.)
VR: Villacorta and Rodas, 1927. (Spanish.)
SJ: Schultze-Jena, 1944. (German.)
AR: Recinos, 1947, 1953. (Spanish.)
Goetz and Morley, 1950. (English.)
Terracini, 1960. (Italian.)
Hayashiya, 1961. (Japanese.)
Saravia Enríquez, 1965. (Spanish.)
BX: Burgess and Xec, 1955. (Spanish.)
RK: Kinzhalov, 1959. (Russian.)

WC: Cordan, 1962. (German.) *Historia...*, incluida la
VC: Villacorta, 1962. (Spanish.) *Revisión de Ximénez*, pero
con la
ortografía
modificada por
Villacorta

It is relevant to review the general character of the available translations.

Francisco Ximénez (1666-1730) is an impressive figure. Serving as parish priest in Chichicastenango (1701-03) and Sacapulas (1721-25) and elsewhere in Guatemala in the interim, he studied the history of Guatemala and wrote about it with an industry and penetration that bear comparison with those of Sahagún in Mexico. His grasp of Quiche was good, and his translation is in the main accurate, but he simply omitted what he could not read (perhaps from 10 to 20 per cent of the Quiche) and he often paraphrased loosely what is readily translated literally. He was influenced in his interpretation of the Popol Vuh by the conviction that the ancient religion was literally the work of the Devil, but this does not greatly mar his translation. He was handicapped by vocabulary limitations which later scholarship has slowly overcome, but he stood enough closer to the ancient Quiche than we do that his translations may be rejected only cautiously. In addition to his grammar, translation of the Popol Vuh, and escolios, he has left us the monumental *Historia de la Provincia de San Vicente de Chiapa y Guatemala*, by far the richest source on the colonial history of the region. Ximénez did not understand the nature of the inflections of Quiche words in most cases, and this leads to a general looseness of translation which occasionally spills over into serious error. Nonetheless, all subsequent translators have leaned heavily on him. I have tried to note those places where I have; that is, where I have no outside confirmation of the meaning of particular words.

Charles Étienne Brasseur de Bourbourg (1814-1874) was in Guatemala in 1855-56 and again in 1859-60. He spent 1856 as parish priest of Rabinal, translating the Popol Vuh and the Rabinal Achih, with the help of Indian informants. His Quiche is very good, and his grasp of the archaic text is materially aided by his familiarity with many languages and particularly with Nahuatl, as well as by his prowess as a collector of ancient manuscripts. He also traveled extensively in Guatemala, searching out the place names and ruins which could shed light on the 15th-century Quiche. His translation is very much tighter than Ximénez', with few omissions of whole lines of text, but he misses some of

the finer points of grammar and is not above sloppy misconstrual when he thinks he understands the main point. His view of the Quiche was romantic and exaggerated. The "lords" become "princes" and the Quiche state an "empire." He estimates the population of Utatlan at 300,000! In the main, however, his translation and notes to the Popol Vuh are unaffected by his later pan-diffusionist excesses, and his contribution to the comprehension of the document is enormous.

Noah Elieser Pohorilles leans so hard on Brasseur's translation that I have some hesitation in accepting his assurance that it was "translated according to the original text." His Quiche is sketchy, and his interpretation of difficult sections is linguistically irresponsible. He had not visited Guatemala, though he had the advantage of some criticism and comments from Eduard Seler. His format is also strange, employing at least five different fonts of type and rearranging the order of the text so that it becomes difficult to follow (see note 820). His reading is distorted by the conviction that the Popol Vuh is a body of astral myths. I have not attempted to include all his proposals in my notes.

Georges Raynaud was a professor at the Sorbonne. He follows Brasseur closely, but his insistence on translating everything leads him to make some very useful suggestions. His command of Quiche was limited, but his perspective on it is a useful one: he looks at the Maya through Huaxtec glasses, and although this proves not to be very helpful, it is good that someone has tried it. Raynaud's translation is if anything looser than Brasseur's; it adds to it, but does not replace it.

José Antonio Villacorta Calderón and Flavio Rodas N. were the first translators who had a real familiarity with grass-roots Guatemala. Rodas, in fact, was born and grew up in Chichicastenango, though he was only half-Indian. At many points they correct details concerning local plants, animals, and the daily life of the Guatemalan Indian. Unfortunately their Quiche vocabulary greatly exceeds their grasp of Quiche grammar, and virtually all their excursions into etymology are disastrous. I have found it impossible to note all their departures from my translation; I should have had to reproduce most of their work. It is obvious in many places that they do not even understand the Quiche pronoun. Their translation is useful but distinctly secondary.

Dr. Leonhard Schultze-Jena was a man of wide anthropological experience even before he did field-work in Chichicastenango and Momostenango and translated the Popol Vuh. Both his text and translation are a distinct advance over any previous ones. His interpretations are careful and scholarly, and there is scarcely an element in the Quiche that does not find its way into his smoothly flowing but somewhat ornate German. His Quiche is excellent, but vocabulary limitations sometimes lead him astray, and he is overly accepting of the obviously corrupt text. His familiarity with Nahuatl is a major advantage to his interpretation of the Aztec influences on the Quiche. His is probably the most scholarly translation available.

Adrián Recinos was a native of Huehuetenango who had a lifelong interest in Guatemala's Indians. His contributions to the study of Quiche documents are important and impressive, for he was the only translator of the Popol Vuh who had a real command of Cakchiquel as well as Quiche. He enriched the interpretation of both literatures in his notes on their points of contact and similarity. His Quiche is good and he is discriminating in his use of sources, but his translation is sometimes loose and interpretative in spots where literalness is required for comprehension. He has done more than perhaps anyone else to untangle the complex history of the manuscript.

Dora M. de Burgess was the widow of Pablo Burgess and co-founder of the Protestant missionary Instituto Bíblico Quiché near San Cristobal Totonicapan. She and her husband were American graduates of Germán universities and spent their lives among the Quiche Indians. Their Quiche was excellent. In translating the Popol Vuh they had the assistance of an Indian teacher at the Instituto, Patricio Xec, who taught Indian students from the old traditional work for many years. The Burgess and Xec translation is based on the Schultze-Jena text as well as the original Manuscript of Rabinal. It is careful and sensible and gives in an earthy Spanish a sparse and literal reading of the Quiche. It underplays the Nahuatl elements in the text and sometimes errs by interpreting archaisms in terms of modern Quiche usage, but it is an invaluable supplement to the better previous versions and frequently clarifies matters of vocabulary or usage missing from the older dictionaries.

The Russian translation by R. V. Kinzhakov is a

Introduction

sensible summary of previous scholarship, leaning heavily on Schultze-Jena and Recinos. It is rarely innovative, but the choices Kinzhalov makes in difficult spots are usually judicious and careful. His Quiche is good and his command of the secondary literature is considerable. He has no direct experience of either Guatemala or Quiche, and his contribution to the elucidation of the Popol Vuh is minor.

Wolfgang Cordan's German translation has the good sense to incorporate many of the clearer readings from Burgess and Xec, but it is the loosest rendering since Ximénez and rarely adds to the intelligibility of the text. Cordan is fairly familiar with the other Mayan groups, and is very much inclined to find Yucatecan affinities for the harder etymological problems in the text. Usually these are unconvincing. His command of Quiche is limited and his handling of interlinguistic comparisons is downright irresponsible, but he makes interesting and sometimes useful suggestions. His terse and fluent text reproduces the tone of the original with some success, but his accuracy does not approach that of the better previous versions and he is somewhat inclined to choose the more bizarre or sexy alternative at ambiguous points.

José Antonio Villacorta Calderón has made numerous and notable contributions to the ancient and colonial history of Guatemala. He has published translations of both the Annals of the Cakchiquels and the Popol Vuh. In 1962 he published a totally new version and chrestomathy of the latter "on the fourth centennial of the poem." Unfortunately his Quiche has not improved greatly since 1927. He incorporates rather indiscriminately the readings of other translators, particularly Raynaud. He is too free in drawing connections from elements of Quiche mythology in all directions—Yucatecan codices, Aztec myths, Guatemalan vase paintings and sculpture, Old World mythology—to be a reliable guide to the difficulties of either the text itself or its broader significance, and while his industry turns up some interesting sidelights on the Quiche and their opus, the contribution of this massive labor is minor.

As a matter of procedure, I have translated the manuscript first without reference to preceding translations, then revised my views in the light of them. Although I began by considering them all equally, I find that in the tight places I have come to rely most heavily on Burgess and Xec, then on

Ximénez, then on Schultze-Jena, Brasseur de Bourbourg, and Recinos, in about that order. My debt to the other translators is relatively minor but will be noted. I have tried to note, too, at exactly which points no outside basis for translation exists beyond the text of the Popol Vuh itself. Most translators have not indicated where they found the words. My documentation on this point will be found in Edmonson, 1965.

My own qualifications as a translator of Quiche are limited. I have spent 18 months in Guatemala studying the language, and a longer period compiling a dictionary of it from ancient and modern sources. I do not speak it. My interest in the Popol Vuh is primarily ethnological rather than linguistic, religious, philosophical, or literary. I have tried to present both text and translation in a form which will clarify the problems they present and facilitate their solution as better information becomes available. My acquaintance with Mam, Yucatec, and Nahuatl is weaker than I could wish for the task at hand, and both the linguistic and ethnographic puzzles of the Popol Vuh continue tantalizingly to exceed my time, skill, and knowledge. That I have ventured to attempt a twelfth translation is largely owing to the failure of the previous versions to deal accurately with its major stylistic feature.

STYLE. It is my conviction that the Popol Vuh is primarily a work of literature, and that it cannot be properly read apart from the literary form in which it is expressed. That this form is general to Middle America (and even beyond) and that it is common to Quiche discourse, ancient and modern, does not diminish its importance. The Popol Vuh is in poetry, and cannot be accurately understood in prose. It is entirely composed in parallelistic (i.e., semantic) couplets (see Garibay K., 1953).

When I had read enough Quiche texts to begin to comprehend the fundamental importance of this feature in them, it seemed to me that a poetic translation of the Popol Vuh might be very helpful in clarifying its ambiguities. The various difficulties of the text leave the translator with an *embarras de richesse*: often a dozen or more quite disparate meanings may legitimately be proposed for a particular monosyllabic root. Knowledge that the author was writing in couplets may diminish this near-hopeless ambiguity by half or even more. The present translation, therefore, has the double object of demon-

strating the importance of this mechanism for comprehension of Middle American Indian literature and of presenting in improved translation what is probably the most splendid literary monument of aboriginal America.

It is my conviction that the stylistic subtleties of the Popol Vuh have eluded all its translators, including me. The language is varied, but it is often telegraphically terse, evoking rather than expressing the rich symbolism of Quiche religion. The nuances of Quiche grammar are demonstrably exploited for effect within this sparse and repetitive form, and do produce a variety of effects—comic, elegant, discursive, dull. I have tried to reflect these in English within the bounds of a tight and complete translation—at least where I think I understand them. There are some elements of Quiche style, however, which are very difficult to reproduce in English.

The Quiche sentence leans forward. Beginning with a collection of orienting adverbial particles, it may proceed with an indefinite number of subtly joined verbal clauses to the eventual noun or noun clauses that finally reveal who or what is doing all this carrying on. In something of the sense that German saves verbs for a final triumphant closure to a thought, Quiche saves nouns. There are markers to show that the noun is coming. Its number, for example, may be revealed early, and other attributes may be thrown in along the way, all contributing to the forward movement towards the person or object who would be in English the antecedent! The difficulties this poses for the translator are, I think, obvious and will be found throughout the present translation.

It is congruent with this syntax that Quiche is, by English standards, excessively fond of passive constructions. A verbal form early in the phrase of the type “its having been thought . . .” may be separated by several lines of poetry from the referent of the pronoun, if there is one. And then it may turn out that the Quiche interest was in these abstract states of being and their sequence, and the final element may not provide a proper subject at all. It may even become apparent that there was no verb there, since both active and passive verbal forms are readily used as nouns in Quiche. The Latin ablative absolute has something of the feel of these Quiche locutions. In order to preserve the poetry of the Popol Vuh, I have had to sacrifice throughout the preferred order of the English sentence. The few cases in which I have re-

sorted to inverting the Quiche order are noted.

The Quiche are very much attuned to the form of discourse used in the Popol Vuh. They speak to each other, at least most of the time, in the same poetic form. If one asks a Quiche-speaker the translation of a Spanish word, he will almost invariably answer with two Quiche synonyms. (*The Anonymous Franciscan Dictionary* of early colonial Quiche is almost entirely composed of such couplet entries!) Words matter, and formal discourse matters even more. Hence direct discourse in the Popol Vuh is usually formally announced twice: at its outset and at its close. The effect is like that of saying “quote . . . unquote.” Furthermore, framing of internal quotes is common, and once or twice there is a quote within a quote within a quote. The clarity of these formalisms is not helped by the fact that one is additionally expected to emphasize his own speech by saying “this is my word; . . . is what I say.” The rigid formalism of Quiche expression is not always easy to convey in English, where such phrases sound awkward and redundant rather than elegant and fixed. I have settled on italics to try to keep internal quotes straight.

The fact that the fundamental poetic form of the Popol Vuh is semantic makes it relatively easy to produce the poetic effect in translation, as indeed has been remarked by most of the better translators. A close rendering of the Quiche inevitably gives rise to semantic couplets, whether they are printed as poetry or as prose. In no case, so far as I can determine, does the Quiche text embellish this relatively primitive poetic device with rhyme, syllabification or meter, not even when it is quoting songs. The form itself, however, tends to produce a kind of “keying,” in which two successive lines may be quite diverse but must share key words which are closely linked in meaning. Many of these are traditional pairs: sun-moon, day-light, deer-bird, black-white. Sometimes the coupling is opaque in English, however clear it may be in Quiche, as in white-laugh. (“White” also means to throw white bone dice; “laugh” also means to play ball.) Occasionally there is a pun key which cannot be produced in English at all (and is therefore given in the notes). Always the underlying couplings are stronger and more evocative in Quiche than can be rendered in any foreign language, even though much of ancient Quiche remains obscure to us.

The fact that the poetic scansion is semantic may make it easier to translate once it is understood, but

it makes it impossible to scan until it is translated. In the face of this circularity, I am quite uncertain at many points about both the scansion and the translation. Often I have found that a rendering which yielded only a weak couplet could on close study be re-read as a stronger couplet which simultaneously clarified an otherwise obscure passage. I am certain that my reading does not exhaust either the poetry or the sense that is expressed, and that the Popol Vuh contains more of both beauty and meaning than I have found in it.

THE LANGUAGE. The Popol Vuh is written in a Latin-derived alphabet (employing *i* for *y* and *v* for *w*, for example). This poses problems, since several features of the language remain inadequately expressed. Vowel length is phonemic in Quiche; it is indicated in the text by double vowels, albeit quite unreliably. Quiche also has a series of glottal consonants ('*b*', '*b'*', '*ch'*', '*k'*', '*q'*', '*t'*', '*tz'*'). Although special symbols for some of these were known to its author, the Popol Vuh uses none of them consistently except the *b* (*p'*). Quiche also distinguishes a palatal and a uvular stop (*k* and *q*), but the manuscript usually does not. In the worst case, a word appearing in the manuscript as *cac* may be: *k'ak* (1) new, (2) angry; *k'aq* (3) designate; *kak'* (4) a wild fruit; *kak* (5) castrate, (6) lie; *kaq'* (7) bump; *kaq* (8) red; *q'ak* (9) retire, (10) flea; *q'aq'* (11) fire; or *qak* (12) hunt. Since the manuscript does not regularly separate pronouns or distinguish glottal stops or vowel length, it could also be: *qa'ak'* (13) our chicken; *qa'aq* (14) our pig; *k'aq'* (15) their tongues; or *q'aq'* (16) our tongues. These possibilities do not exhaust the field nor accommodate the fact that the manuscript may be wrong or illegible, which it often is, but they certainly exhaust the translator.

Quiche grammar has been studied for more than 400 years, but our grasp of it remains superficial. Its general features are well established, but neither its rules of word order (which appear to be stringent) nor the meanings of its verbal inflections (which appear to be elaborate) are more than vaguely described. It is rich in uninflected particles of more or less adverbial force, which are not well glossed. It is indifferent to some distinctions which must inevitably be made in English, notably tense and number. The text of the Popol Vuh neither separates words nor punctuates sentences, so that fully as much of the disagreement among translators is due to differences of morphological interpretation as

may be ascribed to lexical ambiguity. My own grammatical assumptions are given in Edmonson, 1967.

I have found one particular problem which bears special mention, as it illustrates the difficulties on all levels: the glottal stop. Quiche resists both consonantal and vocalic clustering, a fact which greatly aids in the recognition of word boundaries. Spoken Quiche also has a strong terminal stress accent, which sometimes weakens medial vowels to the point that they are frequently omitted in the Popol Vuh and are hard to hear in speech. Finally, one important class of words, the pronouns, have different forms to accommodate following vowels or consonants. I have tried to present a transcription of the text of the Popol Vuh which would reflect my conviction that Quiche never permits clustering within the word, and that the intervocalic glottal stop is a Quiche phoneme.

The glottal stop appears to function in Quiche, however, at three levels. It is often heard as a variant of rearticulation of a lengthened vowel, as in *ba'atz'* for *baatz'* 'spider monkey'. In this case it is subphonemic. It is clearly audible as a consonant in *k e'echa* 'they eat'. Here it is a phoneme. From the Popol Vuh text (where, of course, it can only be inferred) I surmise that it may also operate suprasegmentally as an indicator of phrase boundaries (juncture). Thus the pronominal *ri* 'the' normally becomes *r* before a vowel: *r atit* 'the grandmother'. Yet the Popol Vuh frequently and clearly has *ri'atit* (I infer the glottal stop). Although the state of the text does not permit certainty (and only a fraction of the Quiche words beginning with a glottal stop have been identified), I think such a form no longer means 'the grandmother' but rather a syntactic disjunction best indicated by a comma. Thus *x ch'a r atit* may be 'said the grandmother' but *x ch'a ri, atit* means 'she said this, (the) grandmother.' This supposition has helped to clarify both the poetry and the syntax of the Popol Vuh more than any other single pattern I have found, even though I have not been able to apply it rigorously to the whole text. I have indicated such points by a comma, period, or line break rather than by a glottal stop.

CONTENT. Surprisingly, virtually all the translators have observed that the text of the Popol Vuh is not subdivided in the manuscript. This, however, is an error: it is clearly paragraphed every hundred lines or so with a large dark indented capital. I have reproduced these divisions in my text and translation

where it will be apparent that they correspond to natural segments of the whole work. In the Table of Contents I have given them titles suggestive of their subject matter, though they are of course untitled in the manuscript. Although these divisions and the manner of their treatment strongly suggest that they were separable parts of the mythological and historical traditions of the Quiche, it should be emphasized that the author has selfconsciously ordered and selected them and purposefully attempted a coherent and unitary work.

It would be inappropriate to call the Popol Vuh the epic of the Quiche. Although it belongs to a heroic (or near-heroic) type of literature, it is not the story of a hero: it is (and says it is) the story of a people, and the text is bracketed by opening and closing lines declaring and affirming that intent. In the language and concepts available to him, the author has set down everything that "Quiche" means in its full mythic, historic, and ethnic ambiguity, from the origin of the world to the 16th century. The work is a compendium of Quiche myths, legends, and history. It is a treasury of ethnographic information. But it is first and most surprisingly a coherent literary work, with order, scope, and unity equally missing from the episodic annals of the Cakchiquels and the sybilline prophecies of Yucatan.

The theme of the Popol Vuh is the greatness of Quiche: the people, the place, and the religious mysteries which were all called by that name. It is a tragic theme, but its treatment is not tragic: it is Mayan. The rise and fall of Quiche glory is placed in the cosmic cycling of all creation, and when it is ended, like the cycles of Mayan time, it stops. In cyclic time, of course, every end is a beginning. But the end of the glory of Quiche is not self-renewing. The author has treated his theme as though Quiche and its glory were the central feature of the epoch of which there is human knowledge. The next cycle will be something else, perhaps the epoch suggested by the closing line of the work, something "called Holy Cross."

The cycle of "what is called Quiche" is made up of subcycles—the four creations of the world. They are given unequal treatment. The first cycle ends at line 820 with the fall of the puppets carved of wood who did not learn to worship the gods. The second ends at line 1674 with the destruction of 7 Parrot and his sons for their pride. The third terminates at line 4708 when the hero twins, Hunter and Jaguar Deer,

are transformed into the Sun and Moon. Almost half of the text deals with the fourth creation, from the First Fathers to the present time. Presiding over all four is the Heart of Heaven and Earth, author and parent of creation, to whom the men of the fourth creation learn to pray under a variety of names.

THE QUICHE. Like all of mankind, the Quiche people belong to the fourth creation. Their First Fathers were made from corn by the creator a relatively few generations ago, and these generations are chronicled in the Popol Vuh. After many wanderings they settled in the town that bore their name and there built the most powerful state of 15th-century Guatemala. And there the Spanish conquest found them.

Although the Popol Vuh is written "already in the word of God," and reflects some influence of Christianity, it remains fundamentally an aboriginal work, expressing and documenting the historical experience of the largest and most powerful of the Mayan peoples of Guatemala in the centuries before the Spanish came. Our understanding of the work is fully as dependent on our comprehension of Mayan culture as upon our control of Mayan linguistics. On the other hand, the Popol Vuh is itself one of the very best introductions to the culture that produced it, and provides as clear a view of the civilization of Middle America as any single source we possess.

More than half a million modern Guatemalans speak Quiche, which makes it one of the three largest linguistic groups left in Indian America, and the largest north of Panama. The Quiche live as corn farmers in small villages clustered in 46 *municipios* around 46 ceremonial centers. In a few cases the latter have become modern towns, but mostly they are (as they have always been) villages of ceremonial rank amid others of comparable size religiously subordinate to them, and many of them can be traced to the pre-Columbian past. It is the villages which are the primary social units of the modern Quiche, and indeed it is only Indians literate in Spanish who even preserve the tribal name. Many Quiche farmers call their language "Cakchiquel," and the only customary way of establishing common identity is the question, "Do you speak my language?"

Traditional Quiche life revolves around a patriarchal, patrilineal, and patrilocal family. The principles of hierarchy and authority are greatly emphasized and are reflected in daily life in respect forms in speech (Quiche is, I believe, the only highland language with polite address) and in ceremonious

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patterns of deference in gesture as well. Young Quiches sometimes choose to speak Spanish to avoid the deference exacted by the Quiche pronouns towards older brothers. The discharge of one's duty to one's elders is the fundamental axiom of social existence, and the psychological tone of Quiche culture is somber and guilty. Outside the family one's obligation to the community is a sober discharge of the civic and religious duties which confer prestige and give evidence of thrift and propriety. Wealth and honor are in themselves signs of the favor of God the Father (*Dios qahavixel*), and such favor must be courted by meticulous discharge of one's obligations to parents, older siblings, and the elders of the village.

With the exception of the students of the Instituto Bíblico Quiché, the modern Indians cannot read the Popol Vuh in Quiche. They are nonetheless linked to it by their religion, which is perpetuated on the one hand in family life and community organization, and on the other in an oral and written literature. Almost every major lineage of the preconquest period is known to have written a lineage history comparable to the fourth section of the Popol Vuh. (Most of these are relatively brief, and some are lost.) From the later colonial period there are also legal documents of the town scribes, ordinances of the religious fraternities, letters, and other works. There have been several written divining calendars, two of which are still extant. And there is a lively tradition of religious drama. It is in the drama in public and the lore of divination in private that we find the most important survivals of the ancient religious mysteries—"what is called Quiche."

No more remarkable evidence for these continuities exists than the fact of the survival of the Quiche calendar—or at least of the count of days, the 260-day *chol q'ih* on which the divination system depends. The Quiche named and deified 13 numbers and 20 days, each ranked and presided over by their senior gods. They also deified the 260 permutative combinations. Because they counted vigesimally they recognized a 400-day cycle (*may q'ih*). And because they recognized the solar year they had an 18-month (360-day) cycle (*tun*), to which five days were added to form the year (*hun ab*). The regression of the 260 on the 365-day cycle is such that only four of the 20 days may begin the year, these "year bearers" rotating endlessly in four-year cycles, while the numeral prefix of the first day of the year advances by one each year, thus creating a 13-year cycle. Every 52

years the year will begin on the same day with the same numeral prefix. Larger cycles of time do not appear to have been measured by the Quiche, just as they were not measured by the Aztec, though the religious lore of both reflects some exposure to the astronomy on which the more complex Yucatecan calendar depended.

The calendar was a sacred mystery. All its days and cycles were deified and were linked to the fate of men and nations. Individuals were named for the days, and as the Popol Vuh expresses it "one's day, one's birth" was identical with his destiny. The presiding god of a lineage was similarly assimilated to a universe of almost fantastic order and rigidity, and the authority and rank of the lineage was felt to be an expression of its calendrical position, subject to change at the end of the cycle. The Popol Vuh, however, was a product of troubled times, and its reflection of this passion for order is rendered equivocal by foreign influences and the upheaval occasioned by the rise and fall of the city of Quiche.

THE YAQUI. Quiche culture in general and the Popol Vuh in particular were subjected to considerable Mexican influence, probably beginning around the 10th century but becoming greatly intensified in the 14th, and continuing in colonial times. Nahuatl loan words in classical Quiche, in fact, belong to two rather clearly separable strata: old Mayanized words, principally god names, and new borrowings in more or less unmodified Nahuatl, often military. In a degree, in fact, the Popol Vuh is a bilingual document, for the Mexican Yaqui ('travelers') were in the 15th century a considerable component of the Quiche upper class, and the priest-lords probably spoke some Nahuatl whether they were Mexican or Quiche. The religious concepts of the Quiche thus came to be expressed, now in Nahuatl, now in Maya. Aztec ideas are given in Quiche words and Quiche ideas in Aztec words, much as the Russian nobility of the last century used French. The underlying calendrical systems were at least very similar, but their expression in the Popol Vuh is both enriched and confused by this. The same god is called by many names; the same day has many associations.

In the polyglot context of Guatemala (where no fewer than 14 Mayan languages are spoken today) it would be surprising if Nahuatl were the only foreign influence on Quiche. Inter-Mayan word-borrowing is technically harder to detect, but it undoubtedly occurred, and in a few cases I think I have examples.

Even apart from this difficulty, however, such borrowings were probably very much less important than those from Nahuatl, and were probably principally from Mam. The Yaqui and the Mam were the only foreigners resident in Quiche towns. (Cakchiquel and Zutuhil were still only divergent dialects of Quiche in the 15th century.) It is probable that the Mam town of Zaculeu was the most powerful rival to Quiche during its rise, and indeed almost half the Quiche expansion was at Mam expense. By comparison, Quiche contacts with Kekchi, Pocomchi, Ixil, and other Mayan groups were trivial and are rarely mentioned in Quiche documents.

Scarcely any interpreter of the *Popol Vuh* has been able to resist relating it to the richer, more elegant, more complex, and better-documented culture of the Yucatecan Maya. There can be no question but what much of the pattern of the Quiche work springs from a base in the common traditions of all the Mayan peoples. It is obvious that there was some historical contact between the highlands and the Peten cities. I do not believe, however, that there are more than a few isolated elements in the *Popol Vuh* which can be traced directly to Yucatec, nor do I see evidence of more than casual contact between them in the Post-classic period responsible for the formation of the Quiche book. To suppose, as several writers have, that the Quiche gods are portrayed in Yucatecan codices is to ignore the fact that none of them have Yucatecan names. Nor have any of the Quiche names diffused to Yucatec. The two traditions are very similar at many points, and they illuminate each other helpfully. They are even cognate, but they are never identical.

THE PLACE. The setting of the *Popol Vuh* is extremely parochial, and centers on the now ruined city of Utatlan. The text does not refer to any real places outside of Guatemala, and most of those mentioned lie within a few miles of the old capital. No settlement in the story has been reliably identified before the arrival at Izuma Chi in line 7417, which, if Brasseur is right, is virtually the site of Utatlan itself, though several earlier lineage names have been erroneously interpreted as locations by various scholars. The stage of the story, then, is a small area of the central highlands of Guatemala.

Guatemala is a beautiful country, and the Quiche occupy some of the most beautiful parts of it. The heartland of Quiche territory is in fact the center of the highlands—the broken mountain country and

high plateau from which the principal rivers of Guatemala originate: the Motagua, which flows east to the Gulf of Honduras, the Chixoy, which flows north to the Gulf of Mexico, and the Samala, which flows south to the Pacific. The Quiche are a mountain people, and their towns are mountain towns. It is the mountains, rather than the river valleys around them, which define the continuity of their national territory: the Sierra de Chuacus from Rabinal to Quiche, the Sierra de Totonicapan from Quiche to Quezaltenango, and across the southern horizon the great volcanic cones of the continental divide, cutting off the Quiche from Lake Atitlan and the Pacific.

Here on steep-walled plateaus the Quiche of the last few centuries before the Spanish came built their fortress temples, sacrificed each other to their gods, and guarded their cornfields. They were in constant movement, but it is probable that they moved by lineage, not by town or tribe. Thus few of the major town sites were actually abandoned at any point. Rather they passed from the control of one lineage to that of another—indigenous or foreign—in response to the fortunes of war, the terms of priestly office, and the vicissitudes of lineage politics.

The *Popol Vuh* chronicles the spectacular success of one such lineage: the Kaveks of Quiche, who eventually exacted religious service and tribute from almost 100 towns, and at one point even invaded coastal Chiapas. It passes over in silence their equally spectacular decline. The apogee of Kavek power was in the reign of Blood (Kiq'ab), about 1450-90. During the ensuing 30 years, the Bat lineage of the Cakchiquel built a rival tributary system at the already extant city of Corn Tree (Ixim Chee). When Pedro de Alvarado arrived in 1524, the weakened authority of the Kaveks collapsed in a year. The still vigorous Cakchiquel fought on until 1536.

It will be apparent that the geographic vagueness of most of the *Popol Vuh* is organic and essential. It is not the story of Utatlan, a city occupied long before the Kavek lineage arrived in it. It is only partly located there. But its core is in “the mountains, the valleys” where are hidden the gods who hold the secrets of the fates of men. The local geography of all Quiche towns transcends the limits of the town to include the sacred cornfields and the ubiquitous but isolated shrines of the calendar gods. (At San Francisco el Alto the Panamerican Highway passes 50 feet above the shrine of 9 Dog; at Chichicastenango thousands of tourists have climbed Turukah Hill to

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see the idol of Wind.) It is the sacred geography that matters in the account of ancient Quiche. The First Fathers came from a Tula beyond the sea at the sunrise. Hell is a place down a black road north of Quiche.

Here is a world of sacred mountains and sacred animals. Here are the creation and destruction of the world, and the holy corn and the explanation of

many mysteries. Here are the dangers of the unseen world: the spirits of the mountains, the nagual animals, the stabbing demons, the bringers of omens. These things are too complex to be obvious, too complex even to be remembered. They require a Book. This, then, is the root of the former word. Here is what is called Quiche.

*The Book of Counsel: The Popol Vuh
of the Quiche Maya of Guatemala*

The First Creation

I

This is the root of the former word.
 Here is Quiche by name.
 Here we shall write then,
 We shall start out then, the former words,
 The beginnings
 And the taproots
 Of everything done in the Quiche town,
 The tribe of the Quiche people.
 So this is what we shall collect then,
 The decipherment,
 The clarification,
 And the explanation
 Of the mysteries
 And the illumination
 By Former, Molatagoso
 And Shaper; y Tzakol
 Bearer
 And Engenderer are their names,

I

Are, u xe 'oher tzih.*
 Varal K'iche, u bi.*
 Varal x chi qa tz'ibah vi,*
 X chi qa tikiba vi 'oher tzih,
 U tikaribal *
 U xenabal puch
 R onohel x ban pa tinamit K'iche,*
 R amaq' K'iche vinaq.
 Are q'ut x chi qa qam vi
 U k'utunizaxik,*
 U q'alahobizaxik,
 U tzihoxik puch
 Evaxibal,*
 Zaqiribal
 R umal Tzakol,*
 Bitol;*

10

Alom,*
 Q'aholom, ki bi,*

10

NOTE: The following abbreviations, used throughout the notes, refer to the eleven translations of the Popol Vuh, discussed in the Introduction:

AR, Recinos, 1947, 1953
 BB, Brasseur de Bourbourg, 1861
 BX, Burgess and Xec, 1955
 FX, Ximénez, 1703?
 GR, Raynaud, 1925
 NP, Pohorilles, 1913
 RK, Kinzhakov, 1959
 SJ, Schultze-Jena, 1944
 VC, Villacorta, 1962
 VR, Villacorta and Rodas, 1927
 WC, Cordan, 1962

1. The title of the Popol Vuh, which is announced in line 49, may be literally rendered 'the book of the man of the mat'. The first line implies that this is the beginning, but also the source and depth of the ancient lore. Previous translations give 'history' for 'former word' and ignore the singular pronoun.

2. Most translations include this line in the first sentence, which is grammatically impossible. The sense of the second line is caught by SJ: '... the old lore of what is in this land called Quiche'. What is called Quiche is 'the root of the former words' or the core of the old tradition. Cf. line 8579. Among the possible etymologies of the word *K'iche*, the correct one is surely *k'iy chee* 'many

'trees', which corresponds to the Nahuatl *quauhtlamallan*, whence *Guatemala*. Both ancient and modern sources agree on the glottalization of the initial *k*, although the Popol Vuh regularly has it as *quiche*, and *queche* is a common variant.

3. BB omits *vi*.
 5. The parallelism is better in Quiche: *tikaribal* refers to planting.
 7. SJ translates *tinamit* as 'fort'.
 10. Literally, 'its being caused to be shown'.
 13. VR read *e va xibal* '(to) these (their) descendants'; no other translation does, and the reading is grammatically and poetically unlikely. The couplet refers to what has been made mysterious and what has been made obvious by the creator.

15. *Tzakol* 'maker' refers to such things as cooking and building.

16. *Bitol* 'maker' refers to such things as pottery manufacture.

17-8. *Alom* 'a woman who has been caused to bear children'; *q'aholom* 'a man who has been caused to engender sons'. Quiche terms for children differ by sex of speaker and by sex of referent for a male speaker. A third term, for man's daughter (*mial*), is conceptually ignored in this frequent religious and poetic phrasing.

18. This is the first point at which the MS records glottalization or other non-Spanish sounds. It employs four symbols for this purpose: (1) the *tresillo*, a backwards 3, usually transcribed as *g* (for which SJ uses a

Hunter Possum
 And Hunter Coyote,
 Great White Pig
 And Coati,
 Majesty
 And Quetzal Serpent,
 The Heart of the Lake
 And the Heart of the Sea,
 Green Plate Spirit
 And Blue Bowl Spirit, as it is said,

20 Hun Ah Pu Vuch,*
 Hun Ah Pu 'Utv,*
 Zaqi Nim Aq,*
 Tziiz,
 Tepev,*
 Q'uq' Kumatz,*
 U K'ux Cho,*
 U K'ux Palov,
 Ah Raxa Laq,*
 Ah Raxa Tzel, ch uch'axik,

20

backwards 3); (2) the *cuatrillo*, a 4, usually transcribed as *q* (but for which SJ uses *g*); (3) the digraph *cuatrillo-h*, usually transcribed as *gh* (BB and SJ) or *qh* (VC); and (4) the digraph *cuatrillo-comma*, usually transcribed as *g* (but omitted by VC). These symbols are used in the Popol Vuh for only a very few words and even then inconsistently. The following roots and their derivatives are (with minor exceptions noted where they occur) the only glottalized forms in the text:

(1) *g* for *q* in: *'aq'*, *'aqab*, *eqaleh*, *kaq* (sometimes for both consonants), *loqoh* and *q'equm* (second consonant only). Inconsistently, the same notation is used for *q'* in: *eleq'ah* (rarely), *kaq'ih* (once), *poq'oh*, *q'ab*, *q'alah*, *q'alibal* (once), *q'an*, *q'aq'*, *q'ol*, *q'uuh* (once), and *yog'oh*. It is also used for *k'* in: *k'aganih* and *tak'ah* and for *k* in *kaa*, *kakate* (both places), *kanah* and *ok* (twice).

(2) *q* for *q'* in: *'uq'*, *iq'oh*, *kiq'*, *q'ahol*, *q'axoh*, *q'obih*, *q'oooh*, *q'ooy*, *q'uq'* (first consonant only), *q'ut* (once or twice), and *q'uxuh*. Confusingly, the same notation is used for *k'* in *k'azih* and *k'ux*, for *q* in *Qo*, *quz* and *uq*, and occasionally for *k* in the forms *k*, *koloh*, *kunah* and *tokoh*.

(3) *gh* for *ch'* in *ch'ah*, *ch'ab*, *ch'aooh*, *ch'avah*, *ch'umil* and *uch'ah*. It is used for *ch* in: *ch* (rarely), *chahah* (in one passage), *chakachob* (once), *chamiya* (once), and *chapoh* (which has been heard as glottalized).

(4) *g* for *tz'* in *kotz'ih*, *tz'ikin*, *tz'ite* and *tz'un*.

It is obvious that the usage is too limited and inconsistent to be of much help to the translator.

19. GR has 'master magician of the dawn'; other translations agree on 'blowgun hunter possum'. 'Blowgun hunter' is the 20th day of the calendar. *Vuch'* is a common variant of '*uch'* 'possum', probably *Didelphis yucatanensis* (Tozzer, 1941, p. 248). Possum presides over the hours before dawn; see lines 4025-32.

20. '*Utv*' is coyote, *Canis latrans*.

21-2. FX, AR, BB, and VR read *zaqi nima tziiz* and translate variously as 'great white coati' (AR, NP, FX), 'great white pricker (with spines)' (BB, VC), and 'great white bleeder' (VR); SJ reads *zaqi nimaq tziiz* 'great white coatis'; BX read *zaqi nim aq*, *tziiz* and translate 'great white jabalina and jabali'; GR, who apparently reads it similarly, gives '(great dawn pig), great dawn tapir'. Poetically the third reading is demanded and it is

fully confirmed in lines 545-46. WC translates *tziiz* as 'badger' for some reason; it is a common variant of *ziz* 'coati mundi', probably *Nasua narica yucatanica* (Tozzer, 1941, p. 248). The wild pigs of Central America constitute two genera, the collared peccary (*Pecari angulatus yucatanensis*) and the white-lipped peccary (*Tayassu pecari*) (Tozzer, 1941, p. 204).

23. *Tepev* is plausibly related by SJ to Nahuatl *tepeval* 'conqueror, victor'; in later Quiche texts the same word means 'grandeur, elevation'. The etymology given by VR is fanciful. GR gives 'dominators', FX 'lord', BX 'sovereign', BB 'high, mighty, dominator'.

24. *Q'uq' Kumatz* (the MS has *gucumatz*) is the Quiche form of Quetzalcoatl, literally translated. GR reads it 'the powerful of heaven' for no good reason. FX has 'strong serpent (*q'or kumatz*)'. The quetzal bird is *Pharomacrus mocinno*; it is related to the trogon.

25-6. The lake in highland Guatemala is Lake Atitlan, a large and beautiful body of water ringed by volcanic cones and obviously deified. The sea is the nearby Pacific, but it is remote in terms of travel and was seldom visited by the Quiche. The beaches of the south coast of Guatemala are generally of black volcanic sand, giving the sea-coast a quite distinctive appearance. There is a belief in Chichicastenango, according to Bunzel (1952, p. 428) that the lake of Lemoa is older than Lake Atitlan, which is, in turn, older than the sea. There is a tale in Quezaltenango that Lake Atitlan was stolen from there by a witch (*ah itz'*).

The Chibchans as far away as Colombia had similarly deified lakes: "The Muiscas, furthermore, also worshipped such an *original mother*, goddess of fecundity . . . When she grew old, she returned to her lake, advised men to observe the religious commandments and transformed her spouse and herself into water serpents . . ." (Trimborn, 1962, p. 132). See note to line 6660.

27-8. *Rax* is 'green, blue', but the reference is to earth and heaven. The plate and bowl may also refer to ceremonial vessels used in the ritual count of the months (*may q'ih*). (Compare the 'cup' and 'plate' of the *katun* in Tozzer, 1941, p. 169). Pre Columbian censers in Guatemala were often painted blue, an otherwise rare color in ancient Mesoamerican ceramics. GR translates *laq* 'jadeite', but this is unsupported. WC has 'plate' and 'bowl' reversed.

Who are likewise called,
Who are likewise spoken of
As the Woman with Grandchildren
And Man with Grandchildren,
Xpiacoc (Tz'at'at'an)
And Xmucane by name, (Tz'at'at'an)
Shelterer
And Protector,
Great-Grandmother

R ach' biixik,*
R ach' tzihoxik ri,
Iyom,
Mamom,
Xpiacoc,*
Xmucane, u bi,
Matz'anel,
Ch'uqnel,*
Ka mul Iyom,*

30

30

29-30. The first element in the verb, *ach'* 'fellow, together', is omitted by BX, VR, and SJ and the repetition of the phrase is generally ignored. The parallelism suggests that the second verb is *ach' biixik* 'to be co-called' rather than *ach' bixik* 'to be co-sung'. BB has *ach' tzihonik*, but the MS has it as written, which is better poetry.

33-4. *Xpiacoc* and *Xmucane* are etymologized as Mayan words by BX ('he who comes for a moment, she who immediately disappears'), NP ('slinking toad, disappearing snake'), AR ('the old man, the old woman'), GR ('old secret, old hider'), and VR and VC ('he who comes out and penetrates, he who hides'). SJ (p. 188) gives an interesting survival of the names into the 18th century with what appears to be a folk etymology (*xpiako q'apoh, x makanil*). AR draws attention (p. 83) to the Aztec divining gods Cipactonal and Oxomoco. WC identifies pictures of Xmucane in both the Dresden and Troano codices, but I consider his readings uncertain.

I believe the derivation to be slightly more complex, involving a pair of Nahuatl genealogical names reconstructable as:

yex-pa-ococc(an-e) 'thrice in another two places'
yex-(pa)-omoccane 'thrice in each two places'

Yex- is a combining form of *yey* 'three', and *-pa* is one of its normal suffixes, meaning 'times'. The central forms are closely similar in meaning: *ococcan* 'in another two places' and *omoccan* 'in each two places' (the latter form may require a preceding numeral). The terminal *-e* is vocative. With the reductions indicated, the two words become *Yexpaococ* and *Yexomocane*. I translate 'great-grandfather' and 'great-grandmother', which is explicitly confirmed in the next six lines. (For the Nahuatl forms see Molina, 1944, part 1, pp. 121-2.) It is odd that this frequent couplet places the male first, the reverse of the usual Quiche order; indeed, if the reconstructed forms are correct, they would make better sense reversed.

36. This should probably read *ch'uqnel*.

37. *Ka mul* 'two times'. GR interprets this as 'grandmother (making up part) of the (magical ancestral) couple', which is tortured and unnecessary; SJ has 'twice honored old lady', which also departs from the text.

Like the other Mayan languages, Quiche has an almost indefinite number of counting particles, categorizing size, shape, time, quantity, volume, distance, area, value, etc. These are essential to the numeral system as well as

to the conceptions of measurement. The most general are units of generic "measure" (*pah, et, viq*).

Linear distance was very likely measured in steps (*tan, aquan*) or sleeps (*var*), smaller distances being in fingers (*u vi q'ab*), hands (*q'ab*), and reaches (*q'al*). There may have been a pre-Columbian precedent for using *q'ulibal* for the 4-km. Spanish league. (See also *elebal* as a unit of depth in the note to line 1257.)

Area was measured in vague "spaces" (*xol*) or by the plot (*liy, per*), the mark (*huck'*), the yard (*vok*), or the inheritance (*net*). The most precise unit was the "rope" or *cuerda* (*q'aam*), which was general to Middle American Indians and equals about 437 sq. m. The "fold" (*meh*) was half a cuerda. Area was also measured in agricultural land in terms of how it was worked, by the "dig" (*q'ot*), by the hole (*teq'*), by the furrow (*boch'*), by the day's labor (*q'ih*), or by the job (*chak*).

Volume was measured rather approximately and was somewhat confounded with size and weight (*'alal*). The units were the pinch (*xet, q'eet*), the finger (*ch'ip*), the fistful (*muq', mah, moq*), the handful (*q'ab*), the arm-load (*q'al, xaq'ab, lot'*), the head load (*chuy*), the shoulder load (*tel*), and the back load (*ch'ih, eq*). Some additional precision could be gained by referring to the containers of particular substances (see note to line 721). Weight and force could be somewhat specified by the pull (*hiiq', hur*) or heave (*nim*). Quantity is often described only in general terms as a little (*zkakin*), enough (*okikan*), exact (*tz'akat*), much (*zibalah, k'iy, q'atza, xo, tih*), a lot (*tzatz*), or too much (*iq'ovinak*). Size (*nimal*) is usually indicated vaguely as little (*ch'uti*) or big (*nim*). Most measurements are very specific to their respective contexts. Thus quantity of food and drink is commonly indicated by the nip (*nitz*), peck (*tzop*), nibble (*tzok'*), lick (*rep, riq'*), suck (*ts'ub*), chew (*puq*), mouthful (*ba'*), bite (*tiy, pur*), drink (*uq, kam*) or swallow, (*biq', qub*), or rarely by the "meal" (*ti, tih*), slice (*puz, zet'*), or cut (*kux, qop*). Vegetable products may be specified by the sprout (*tux, tzuzq*), stalk (*chiy*), tip (*vi*), bunch (*tam*), or strip (*hut, ch'al, mich'*); plastic products like dough by the roll (*botz'*), ball (*t'oy*), ring (*tzin*), round (*zir*), or mixture (*q'ut*).

The measurement of time was the supreme achievement of the Maya. Even here, however, the smaller units are vague: an instant is a blow (*mah, biiq'*), a "straight" (*zuq*), a ray (*ch'ab*), or a "time" (*qot*); an instance is a time (*mul*) or a try (*tih*). Measurement of hours of the

And Great-Grandfather,
As it is said
In Quiche words.
Then they said everything
And did it furthermore,
In the bright existence
And bright words.
This we shall write already within the word of God,

day was a matter of some interest but does not appear to have been codified (see note to line 4032). A day is a sun (*q'ih*). A month (*ik'*) is 20 days, though the lunar month (*chih*) is also counted (see note to line 8309). A row (*chol*) of days makes up the 260-day cycle (see note to line 184), and a ray (*tun*) of days the 360-day one. One breath (*ab*) is the 365-day solar year, and a pass (*may*) the 400-day one. The 52-year calendar round may have been called a tie (*xim*) of days (see note to line 67).

Measurement of velocity was crude. Distances were sometimes indicated in sleeps (*var*), but speed was implied by the verbs "run" (*anik*) and "pass quickly" (*q'atah*).

The units of value were specified in terms of particular products. Tribute (*patan*) was counted by the "rise" (*yak*), and there were several additional words for increment in frequent use (*in*, *qoh*, *paz*, *tik*, *ts'ab*, *xi*). Price (*ahil*), debt (*q'az*), and payment (*toh*) were referred to the value of the cacao bean (*kako*); the largest number given a special name was the head load (*chuy* or *ch-u-vi*) of cacao, equal to 8,000.

Cordage and textiles may illustrate the vagueness, flexibility, and specificity of the units employed. String was counted by the thread (*batz'*), length (*rab*), tuft (*bot*), hank (*zek*, *choq*), skein (*tzay*, *yat*), twist (*tum*, *yitz*, *bal*, *q'oy*), ball (*bol*, *k'olech*), coil (*kor*), bend (*qot*), knot (*kutz*), or bundle (*yut'*, *zur*, *piz*, *batz*); things strung, such as beads, by the strand (*ch'ik*, *ch'ip*). Cloth was counted by the wrinkle (*q'och*), pleat (*yech*), weave (*q'in*), square (*zut*), or bolt (*kem*). Sewing was counted by the piece (*ts'ix*). Clothing was counted by the fold (*buz*), garment (*q'u*), or change (*hal*); belts or ribbons by the waist (*paz*); and blankets by the cover (*pach*).

People or animals can be counted by the "mouth" (*chi*) or "face" (*vach*), by the row (*eqalem*), rank (*le*), section (*xal*), division (*hach*, *pax*), order (*ch'ob*), type (*taz*), group (*q'at*, *pop*), or crowd (*mutz*, *tak*). Liquids are classed by the drop (*tz'uh*, *tur*, *bel*), jet (*tan*), "drawing" (*pul*), or pool (*pa*); flat objects by the plank (*tem*), stack (*tik*), stretch (*lik'*, *lah*), level (*tiz*), stage (*ch'at*), or spread (*tutz'*); and small discrete objects by particle (*q'ah*), bit (*pir*), roll (*kach'*) or piece (*tz'it*, *qoq'*), pile (*mol*), heap (*tub*, *lut*) or collection (*toq'*, *mak*), or fall (*xul*, *qah*). Sounds or blows specify the stroke (*yih*, *bah*, *rap*, *tan*), the blow (*buh*, *bug'*, *k'ah*, *potz'*, *q'oh*, *q'oz*, *t'ak*), the rap (*tur*), clap (*tz'ah*), shout (*yah*), or cry (*oq'*).

Numeration itself was complex. In addition to the

Ka mul Mamom,*

Ch uch'axik

Pa K'iche tzih.*

Ta x ki tzihoh r onohel

R uq x ki ban chik

Chi zaqil q'oolem,*

Zaqil tzih.*

Vae x chi qa tz'ibah ch u pam chik u ch'aabal Dios,*

40

cardinal numbers, ordinals could be made by adding possessive pronouns: *kaib* 'two', *u kaib* 'second'. Fractions involved the suffix *-il*: *ox* 'three', *oxil* 'one-third'. One-half was the 'middle' or a 'fragment' (*nig'ah ch'akub*, *q'ip*), and a pair is *q'ul* or *ug*, a 'set' *puk*. Verbalized numerals indicate the passage of time: *kahib* 'four', *kahibir* 'in four (days)'. The numerals were based on independent roots from 1 to 10; 11-19 were indicated by 10 plus the original numerals, suffixed; 20 was a 'man' (*vinaq*); 21-39 were additive compounds of these elements; higher multiples of 20 were indicated by a pre-fixed multiplying coefficient (2 x 20, 3 x 20, etc.). Somewhat arbitrarily, other roots were substituted for 'man' in the higher multiples, e.g., *o q'al* 'five armloads' (=100), *o tuk* 'five jarfuls' (=200), *o much* 'five piles' (=400). Multiples of 400 use the root *q'o* ('surpass') for that numeral, and the highest numeral word was a 'head load' (*chuy*) or 8,000.

38. This list gives nine or ten pairs of god names. It is most likely that the Quiche, like the Aztec, had ten pairs of "major gods", one for each of the 20 months in the 400-day *may q'ih* cycle, and that, like the Aztec, they reassigned them to fit within the 18-month (plus 5 days) solar year (*hun ab*), two gods being assigned to each of two months, and one each to the remainder. Other passages give the same number but with different names, and it may well be that these are titles or epithets rather than separate deities.

40. Modern Quiche prayers begin "*nu logolah nan*, *nu logolah tat* (my beloved mother, my beloved father)," doubtless a representation of the same conception of divinity. The assumption by NP and others that the deity is singular and bisexual is a distortion that follows from not understanding the poetry.

43. *Zaqil* 'whiteness' is interpreted as a metaphor for truth by BX, for prosperity by BB, for beginning by AR, for dawn by GR and VC, for purity by VR, for clarity by SJ and FX. The sense seems to me to be given in line 52. See also note to line 3310.

44. RK has 'in the light of history'.

45-6. GR inexplicably inverts this to mean before the coming of Christianity, which is impossible. The poetic pace in this and the next dozen lines or so is slightly erratic, as is consonant with their obvious interpolation at the time of writing. This is perhaps some evidence for the more traditional character of other parts of the text. It is clear that the reference is to a pre-Columbian manuscript (*vuhil* 'kind of book'). It cannot be certainly in-

The First Creation

Already in Christianity.

We shall save it

Because there is no longer

A sight of the Book of Counsel,

A sight of the bright things come
from beside the sea,

The description of our shadows,

A sight of the bright life, as it is called.

There was once the manuscript of it,

And it was written long ago,

Only hiding his face is the reader of it,

The mediator of it.

Great was its account

And its description

Of when there was finished

The birth

Of all of heaven

And earth:

The four creations,

"y alq' lo piensa"

(Ximénez, en el

manuscrito

bilingüe.

(Folio 1r), 20)

60

"The one who reads it

and assesses it has a

hidden identity."

- D. Tedlock

furthered that the author of our text did not have access to such a manuscript, though he does imply that he could not read it. It is, of course, possible that this disclaimer was merely politic. These two lines represent the last use of Spanish until close to the end of the text (line 7642).

47. *Elezah* 'to cause to come forth' is the Quiche verb for 'to save' as Christ saves. The implication is material to interpreting the references to the original Popol Vuh which follow.

49. *Ilobal* 'sight' is not a certain reading; *ilobal* 'care' is also possible and would materially alter the assertion. The MS reads *ilbal re popo vuuh*. NP notes that Stoll found *vuuh* to mean the paper producing *amate* tree (*Ficus americana*) in Uspanteec.

50. *Ch aqa palov*. All translations agree in reading this as 'from the other side of the sea (*ch aqan palov*)'. I nonetheless believe 'from beside the sea' to be a more accurate rendering. The 'bright things' in poetic apposition to the book are probably hieroglyphic pictures, which are, as the text goes on to tell us, 'the description of our shadows' and 'a sight of the bright life'. The verb should probably read *petinak*.

51. 'Shadows' and 'darkness' are frequent in even very early Quiche references to "the days of our gentility," i.e., pagan times. RK translates 'protection', which is loose.

53. BX read *q'o nabe u vuhil*, which would be 'there is first its manuscript'. They translate 'the first book exists', but that would be *q'o u nabe vuhil*. Without the pronoun *u*, the force of *nabe* is adverbial. I agree with FX and BB, therefore, in including it in a past tense verb. VR apparently read the text *qa nabe vuhil* 'our first book' but their own text has *co*, not *ca*. The use of the book is described in line 8141. That the original was a hieroglyphic manuscript is strongly suggested by repeated

Pa Christionoil chik.

X chi q elezah *

R umal ma ha bi chik

Ilobal r e Popol Vuh,*

Ilobal zaq petenak ch aqa palov,*

50

U tzihoxik qa muhibal,*

Ilobal zaq k'azilem ch uch'axik.

Q'o nabe vuhil,*

Oher tz'ibam puch,

Xa, eval u vach ilol r e,*

Bizol r e.*

Nim u peyoxik,*

U tzihoxik puch

Ta chi k'iz,

Tzuq *

Ronohel kah,

Ulev;

U kah tzuquxik,*

"solo que es fan creíne
(quieres) . tech
que interfirer
Sam Coltrane 60

references to the 'former words' and to the clarity or obscurity of them. See lines 1, 1349, 1685-6, 2201, 5333-4, 5341, 5699 5700, 5995-6, 6279-80, 7171-3, 7365-6. The impression is strengthened by the almost apologetic tendency of the narrator to identify obscure and archaic elements and distinguish them from modern ones. Thus most proper names are followed by the redundant *u bi* 'his name', and obscure lines are frequently ended by *ch uch'axik* '(as) it was said'.

55. *Eval u vach* 'hidden his/its face'. All the translations assume that *it* is the book that is hidden, but grammatically *u* refers to *ilol* 'the reader'.

56. It is notable that the singular number is clear in this couplet; it could conceivably have referred to a particular reader and thinker in hiding from the Spanish at this time or, slyly, to the writer himself, or yet by synecdoche to all the interpreters of the ancient books. The Popol Vuh was written scarcely 30 years after the conquest of Quiche and 20 years after the surrender of the Cakchiquel. There can have been no dearth of trained Indian priests in the central highlands at the time.

57. *Peyoh* is unknown to me; I am translating it by its apparent parallelism to *tzihoh*. Others give 'the description is greatly detailed' (BX), 'admirable is its appearance' (BB, NP), 'great its appearance' (VC), 'great was the description' (AR), 'great (was) the exposition' (GR), 'grandiose was its derivation', 'exalted was its appearance' (SJ, RK), 'great is its coming' (FX).

60. Literally, 'sprouting'.

63. All the translators have read this as *tzukuxik* and rather loosely translated the passage as having something to do with corners (*tzuk*), thus confounding the following ten lines. I read *tzuquxik* 'to cause to be born, be made to sprout, be nourished'. The verb is the same as that in line 60.

The four humiliations,
The knowledge
Of the four punishments,
The rope of tying together,
The line of tying together,
The womb of heaven,
The womb of earth.
70
Four creations,
Four humiliations, it was told,
By the Former
And Shaper,
The Mother
And Father
Of Life
And Mankind,
The Inspirer
And Heartener,
Bearer
And Heartener of
Light
And the Race,
Children of the Mother of Light,
Sons of the Father of Light,
The Meditator,
The Thinker
Of everything,
Whatever exists:
Heaven,
Earth,
Lake,
And Sea.

II
Here is the description
Of these things:
Truly it was yet quiet,

64. *Xukutaxik* 'to be made to kneel, to cause to be humiliated'. The other translations give here: 'four sides' (WC, BX), 'the quadrangulation of their lines' (BB), 'the division of their four corners' (NP), 'the quadrangulation' (GR), 'divided into four parts' (AR), 'measuring what was (in heaven)' (VR), 'four angles' (SJ, RK, VC), 'divided into four parts' (FX). Except for VR, everybody agrees that *kah* is 'four' but the verb is ignored. BB's text even omits the line.

65. *Etaah* may also mean 'measure', and it is so interpreted in previous translations.

66. *Cheexik* 'to be punished (as by caning)': 'its being piled with stakes' (FX, NP), 'their angles' (BB), 'the four (cardinal) points' (GR, RK), 'squaring' (VR), 'posts' (SJ), 'heaven was measured' (AR), 'stakes placed'

U kah xukutaxik,*
R etaxik,*
U kah cheexik,*
U meh q'aamaxik,*
U yuq q'aamaxik,
U pam kah,*
U pam ulev.
70
Kah tzuq
Kah xukut, ch uch'axik
R umal ri Tzakol,
Bitol,
U chuch,
U qahav
K'azilem,
Vinaqirem,
Abanel,*
80
K'uxilanel,
Alay r ech,
K'uxilay r ech
Zaqil,
Amaq'il,
Zaqil al,*
Zaqil q'ahol,
Ah biz, "worries, knowes of days,"
Ah naoh and Tedioe
Chi r ech r onohel,
A to q'ool vi:
90
Kah,
Ulev,
Cho,
Palov.

II
Are, u tzihoxik
Vae:
Q'a ka tz'inin ok,

(BX), 'markers set' (WC), 'affirmed' (VC). There is again no real concensus, and the passive inflection is generally ignored.

67-8. The reference here is probably to the "tying of the years" at the end of the 52-year cycle; see Sahagún, 1938, 2:269.

69-70. The MS has *pa* for *pam*; cf. lines 8259-60.

79. This may be a mistake for *alanel* 'bearer' as is implied by the following couplet; see lines 171-2, 663-4.

85-6. Literally, 'brightness children-by-the-mother', 'brightness son-by-the-father'.

90. The particle *to* may be a textual error; *a ta* is 'perhaps'; *a ta q'o* 'might have been'. The MS is not entirely clear. Poetically the line should parallel the preceding one.

The First Creation

Truly it was yet stilled.	Q'a ka chamam ok.
It was quiet.	Ka tz'inonik,*
Truly it was calm.	Q'a ka zilanik.
Truly it was solitary	Q'a ka lolinik,
And it was also still empty, the womb of heaven.	Ka tolon a puch u pa kah.
III	III
These are truly then the first words, The first utterances.	Vae q'ut e nabe tzih, Nabe' uch'an.
There was not one person yet, One animal, (Deer)	Ma ha bi 'ok hun vinaq, Hun chikop,
Bird,	(Keh,)*
Fish,	Tz'ikin,
Crab,	Kar,*
Tree,	Tap,*
Rock,	Chee,
Hole,	Abah,
Canyon,	Hul,
Meadow	Zivan,
Or forest.	K'im,
All by itself the sky existed.	K'icheelah.
The face of the earth was not yet visible.	Xa, u tukel kah q'oolik.
All by itself the sea lay dammed,	Ma vi q'alah u vach ulev.
And the womb of heaven,	Xa, u tukel r emanik palo,
Everything.	U pam kah,*
There was nothing whatever	R onohel.
Silenced	Ma ha bi naki la
Or at rest.	Ka molobik,*
Each thing was made silent,	Ka kotz'obik.
Each thing was made calm,	(Hun ta ka tz'inibik,)*
Was made invisible,	Hun ta ka zilobik,
	Ka mal ka banatah,*

99. *Q'a* 'truly' may be omitted here and in line 102.
107. There appears to be a line missing here, probably *keh* 'deer'; see line 265.

109. The Quiche idea of fish was probably derived mainly from the fish of Lake Atitlan.

110. WC says 'shellfish'. The reference is presumably to an ocean crab of the Pacific coast.

120. The MS has *pa* for *pam*.

123. This appears to be a textual error and should probably read *malebik* 'made invisible' rather than *molobik* 'made to assemble'. The MS is not clear; the couplet, which is repeated in lines 127-8, remains a little loose.

125. There is probably a line missing here, perhaps the one I have supplied; see lines 99-100.

127-8. I believe with GR and VC that this is *maleh* 'render invisible' as in line 123. The couplet is obscure in almost all translations:

Nothing that said "*mal*,"

Nothing that said "*kotz*" (that is a sound in heaven) (FX)

That made (the least) rubbing,
That made any sound in heaven (BB)
That made a noise in heaven.
There was nothing standing upright. (NP)
Everything was invisible,
Everything was immobile in heaven (GR)
That had any resemblance
To what existed already made in heaven (VR)
That rippled
Or that rustled in heaven (SJ)
Nor moved
Nor made any noise in heaven (AR)
Nor ran races,
Nothing that flew in the sky (BX)
That could make any noise.
There was nothing that could move or shake in heaven (RK)
Nothing was united,
Nothing broke the silence of heaven (WC)
It was invisible what was made,
It was restless what was made (VC)

Was made to rest in heaven.
There was not, then, anything in fact
That was standing there. 130

Only the pooled water,
Only the flat sea.
All by itself it lay dammed.
There was not, then, anything in fact that might
have existed.

It was just still.
It was quiet
In the darkness,
In the night.
All alone the Former
And Shaper, 140
Majesty,
And Quetzal Serpent,
The Mothers
And Fathers
Were in the water.
Brilliant they were then,
And wrapped in quetzal
And dove feathers.
Thence came the name
Of Quetzal Serpent. 150
Great sages they were
And great thinkers in their essence,
For indeed there is Heaven
And there is also the Heart of Heaven.
That is the name
Of the deity, it is said.

IV

So then came his word here.
It reached
To Majesty
And Quetzal Serpent
There in the obscurity,
In the nighttime.
It spoke to Majesty
And Quetzal Serpent, and they spoke.
Then they thought;
Then they pondered.
Then they found themselves:

148. *Raxon* is a gray bird with blue wings, possibly *Cotinga amabilis*.

149. The plural number is clearly implied, but there is a return to the singular 'he is named'. Line 139 is also singular. The confusion is reminiscent of the similar grammatical problems in relation to God and Adam in Genesis.

Ka kot' ka banatah pa kah.
X ma q'o vi naki la
 Q'oolik yakalik.
Xa r emanik ha,
 Xa liyanik palo,
Xa, u tukel r emanik;
 X ma q'o vi naki la lo q'oolik.

Xa ka chamanik,
 Ka tz'ininik
Chi q'equum,
 Chi 'aqab.
Xa, u tukel ri Tzakol,
 Bitol,
Tepev,
 Q'uq' Kumatz,
E' Alom,
 E' Q'aholom,
Q'o pa ha.
 Zaq tetoh e q'o vi.
E muqatal pa q'uq',
 Pa raxon.*
Are, u biinam vi *
 Ri Q'uq' Kumatz.
E nimaq etamanel,*
 E nimaq ah naoh chi ki q'oheyik.*
Kehe q'ut xax q'o vi ri kah,
 Q'o nay puch u K'ux Kah.
Are, u bi
 Ri kabavilch uch'axik *

IV

Ta x pe q'ut u tzih varal.
X ul
K uq ri Tepev,
Q'uq' Kumatz,
Varal chi q'equmal,*
Chi 'aqabal.
X ch'av r uq ri Tepev,
Q'uq' Kumatz, x e ch'a q'ut,
Ta x e naohinik;
Ta x e bizonik.
Ta x e rigo k ib:

151. Line omitted by BB.

152. I agree with WC that the terminal phrase is prepositional rather than verbal.

156. WC interprets *kabavil* 'he who sees in the dark', which is obscure to me. See note to lines 5277, 7128.

161. BX omit *varal*.

They assembled
Their words,
Their thoughts.
Then they gave birth —
Then they heartened themselves.
Then they caused to be created
And they bore men.
Then they thought about the birth,
The creation
Of trees
And shrubs,
And the birth of life
And humanity
In the obscurity,
In the nighttime
Through him who is the Heart of Heaven,

1 Leg by name.

X ki kuch
Ki tzh,
Ki naoh.
Ta x k alah,*
Ta x ki k'uxilah k ib.
X e vizaq ta *
X k alah puch vinaq.
Ta x ki naohih u tzuqik,
U vinaqirik
Chee,
Q'aam,
U tzuquxik puch k'azilem,*
Vinaqirem
Chi q'equmal,
Chi 'aqabal,
R umal ri, u K'ux Kah,
Hu r Aqan u bi.*

170 170

180

171. Poetic parallelism precludes the reading *ta x q'alah* which is adopted by all the translators.

173-4. I read this as *vinaqitah* 'to cause to be peopled', paralleling *alah vinaq* 'to bear men'.

179. BB has *tzuqik* for *tzuquxik*.

184. 1 Leg is certainly a calendar name but not in Quiche. Yucatec has a day 'leg (*oc*)', corresponding to the Quiche 'dog (*tz'i*)' and Nahuatl 'dog (*etzcuinilli*)'. Compare 2 Leg (line 928) and 4 Leg (line 7282). The suggestion that *Hu r Aqan* is to be related to the Caribbean word 'hurricane' is nonsense. Bunzel (1952, p. 57) suggests that *Hu r Aqan* is worshipped in modern Chichicastenango under the name Manuel Lorenzo, but this seems farfetched. The Popol Vuh suggests that the 15th-century Quiche were familiar with the count of days in Quiche, Nahuatl, Mam, and perhaps Yucatec. (The Quiche count is identical with that of Cakchiquel and Zutuhil.) In these four languages the count runs as follows (with approximate or suggested meanings of the names):

	1	2	3	4
Quiche	imox	iq'	aqabal	k'at
Nahuatl	cipactli	echecatl	calli	cuetzpallin
(crocodile)	(wind)	(house)	(lizard)	
Mam	imox	ix haun	voton	kana
Yucatec	imix	ik	akbal	kan
		(wind)	(night)	
	5	6	7	8
Quiche	qan	kame	kch	q'anil
(snake)	(death)	(deer)		(corn ear)
Nahuatl	coatl	miquiztli	mazatl	tochtli
(snake)	(death)	(deer)		(rabbit)
abaak	kamik	che		lambat
chicchan	cimi	manik		lamat
(snake)	(death)			

	9	10	11	12
Quiche	toh	tz'i	baatz'	ey
	(rainstorm)	(dog)	(monkey)	(tooth)
Nahuatl	atl	itzcuintli	ozomatl	malinalli
	(water)	(dog)	(monkey)	(vine)
Mam	mulu	tz'i	baatz'	aiyup
	(rainstorm)	(dog)	(monkey)	
Yucatec	muluc	oc	chuen	eb
	(rainstorm)	(leg)	(monkey)	
	13	14	15	16
Quiche	ab	ix	tz'ikin	ahmak
	(cane)	(jaguar)	(bird)	(owl)
Nahuatl	acatl	ocelotl	quauhtli	cozacaquahtli
	(cane)	(jaguar)	(eagle)	(buzzard)
Mam	been	ix	tz'ikin	chabiin
	(cane)	(jaguar)	(bird)	
Yucatec	ben	ix	men	cib
	(cane)	(jaguar)		
	17	18	19	20
Quiche	nooh	tihax	kavok	hunapu
	(incense)	(flint)		(hunter)
Nahuatl	ollin	tecpatl	quiahuatl	xochitl
	(earthquake)	(flint)	(rainstorm)	(flower)
Mam	kikap	chinach	kavak	ahav
	(blood)			(lord)
Yucatec	caban	eznab	cauac	ahav
	(earth)	(flint)		(lord)

It is relevant to add that the Quiche also call the 14th day *balam* and that the Pipil usage differed somewhat from standard Nahuatl, calling the 9th day *quiahuatl*, the 14th *teyolocuani*, the 16th *tecolotl*, the 17th *tecpil anahuatl* and the 19th *ayutl*. (The Ixil day names are identical with Quiche except that *k'at* is pronounced *kach*; *toh* is *cho*, and *tz'i* is *chi*.)

The general divinatory meanings of the days in Quiche are respectively: (1) bad, (2) good, especially for prayer, (3) good for hexing and matchmaking, (4) bad, (5) bad because of anti-marital witchcraft, (6) good for healing, prosperity, and justice, (7) good for approaching the ancestors, (8) good for prayers about corn and harvest, (9) pain, fighting, and chronic

1 Leg Lightning is the first,
And the second is Dwarf Lightning.
Third then is Green Lightning,
So that the three of them are the Heart of Heaven.
Then they came to Majesty
And Quetzal Serpent, and then was the invention
190 Of light
And life.
"What if it were planted?
Then something would brighten —
A supporter,
A nourisher.
So be it.
You must decide on it.
There is the water to get rid of,
To be emptied out,
200 To create this,
The earth
And have it surfaced
And levelled
When it is planted,
When it is brightened —
Heaven
And earth.
But there can be no adoration
Or glorification
210 Of what we have formed,
What we have shaped,
Until we have created a human form,
A human shape," so they said.
So then this the earth was created by them.
Only their word was the creation of it.
To create the earth, "Earth," they said.

illness, (10) sexy, (11) good for recovery of financial losses or household affairs, (12) good for prayer for prosperity or advice against error or ill temper, (13) children, (14) good for prayer to *huyub-tak'ah* 'mountain and valley', (15) prayers about money, gratitude, (16) good for prayers about money, (17) courtship, freeing of prisoners, paralysis witchcraft, (18) slander and quarrels, (19) trips, quarrels, (20) ancestors, domesticity. (Schultze-Jena, 1933, pp. 29-32)

186. I believe SJ (p. 187) correctly interprets the etymology of *ch'ipi* 'dwarf'; cf. *ch'ipi nanahuac* in lines 5191-2. *Kaab* is a common variant of *katb* 'two'. BX misprint *ch'ipa* for *ch'ipi*.

193 ff. The frequent use of direct discourse in this and succeeding passages suggests the possible ritual-dramatic origin of this part of the text. The preceding section is of a different character, although its poetic beauty and tightness also suggest liturgy. The metaphor of creation as an act of farming has occasioned some confusion, some translators reading all forms of *zag* as references to

Ka Kulaha Hu r Aqan nabe,
U kaab q'ut Ch'ipi Ka Kulaha,*
R ox chik Raxa Ka Kulaha,
Chi' e q'u' oxib ri, u K'ux Kah.
Ta x e' ul k uq ri Tepev,
Q'uq' Kumatz, ta naohixik

190

Zaq,
K'azilem,
"Hu pa cha ta chavax ok?*
Ta zaqir ok puch a pa chi nak,*

Tzuql,

Kool.

Ta ch ux ok.*

K ix noohin tah.*

Are ri ha ch el tah,

Chi hama tah,

Chi vinaqir va,

Ulev

U laqel ta q'u r ib

Ch'at ta q'ut *

Ta chavax ok

Ta zaqir ok

Kah,

Ulev.

Ma ta q'ut u q'ihilabal,

U q'alahibal*

Ri qa tzak,

Qa bit,

Ta vinaqir ok vinaq tzak,

Vinaq bit," x e ch'a q'ut.

Ta x vinaqir q'u ri, ulev k umal.

Xa ki tzih x q'ohe ri, u vinaqirik.

Chi vinaqir ulev, "Ulev," x e ch'a.

200

210

dawn. 'Brightening' is a metaphor for the maturing corn. The first verb of this frequent couplet is obscure: sometimes it is *avah* 'plant' (line 431) and sometimes it is *chavah* 'whiten' (line 5901). It may be an intentional and traditional pun.

194. The MS has *o* for *ok*.

197-8. WC gives:

So be it!

Let the void be filled!

198. The pronoun is plural. The trinity of the Heart of Heaven is addressing Majesty and Quetzal Serpent. With FX, SJ, and BX, I read it as *naohih* 'think' rather than *nohih* 'fill'. See lines 190, 228, 673.

204. *Ch' a ta* is read 'so they spoke' by WC. This is not textual and is grammatically unlikely, given the context. The MS has *chata*.

210. The MS has *u calaibal*.

The First Creation

190

Immediately it was created.
 It was just like a cloud,
 Like a mist then,
 The creation then,
 The whirlwind.
 Then the mountain was asked to come from the
 water.
 Straightaway there were great mountains.
 Just their power,
 Just their magic
 Caused the making then,
 The invention
 Of mountains
 And valleys.
 At a stroke there were also created cedar groves on
 them
 And pine forests on them.
 So Quetzal Serpent then rejoiced,
 "It is good that you have come,
 Oh Heart of Heaven,
 Oh 1 Leg,
 And you, Dwarf Lightning
 And Green Lightning.
 Our forming is successful,
 And our shaping," they said.
 And once they had created
 The earth,
 The mountains
 And valleys,
 The paths of the waters were unravelled
 And they proceeded to twist along among the hills.
 So the rivers then became more divided
 As the great mountains were appearing.
 And thus was the creation of the earth
 When it was created by him
 Who is the Heart of Heaven,
 The Heart of Earth,
 As they are called.
 And they were the first to think of it.
 The sky was rounded out there
 And the earth was rounded out in the water,

200

210

corn.
ome-
it is
ionalHeart
pent.
ather
nis is
con-

Libah chi x vinaqirik.
 Kehe ri xa tzutz',*
 Xa may vi,*
 U vinaqirik chik,
 U pupuheyik.*
 Ta x ta pe pa ri huyub.*

Hu zuq nimaq huyub x uxik.
 Xa ki naval,
 Xa ki puz
 X banatah vi
 U naohixik
 Huyub,
 Tak'ah.
 Hu zuq r ach' vinaqirik u k'izizil u pa,*

220

Chahil u vach.
 Kehe q'ut x kikot vi ri Q'uq' Kumatz,
 "Utz mi x at ulik,
 At, u K'ux Kah,
 At, Hu r Aqan,
 At pu, Ch'ipi Ka Kulaha,
 Raxa Ka Kulaha.
 X ch utzinik qa tzak,
 Qa bit," x e ch'a q'ut.
 Nabe q'ut x vinaqir

230

Ulev,
 Huyub,
 Tak'ah,
 X ch'oboch'ox u be ha,
 X biniheyik k'olehe r aqan xol tak huyub.*
 Xa ch'obol chik x e q'ohe vi ha,
 Ta x k'utuniheyik nimaq huyub.
 Kehe q'ut u vinaqirik ulev
 Ri ta x vinaqirik k umal ri
 U K'ux Kah,
 U K'ux Ulev,
 K e' uch'axik.
 Ri q'ut e nabe x ki noohih.
 X k'olo vi ri kah,*
 X k'olo nay puch ulev ch u pam ha,

240

250

accounts for all the elements: 'then one heard the mountains come from the water'. The other translations are elliptical and grammatically obscure.

231. Actually a juniper tree, *Juniperus* sp.

246. *K'olehe* is presumably related to *k'lobah* 'to circle', *k'olok'ik* 'round', *k'lotih* 'curl'; see note to line 459.

255-6. WC apparently reads *q'olo* 'be, stay', which is not textual and results in obscurity.

And thus it was invented as they thought,
As they reflected
On its perfection,
Its being made by them.

260

V

Then they thought further
Of the wild animals,
Guardians of the forest,
And all the population of the wild:
Deer,
Birds,
Panthers,
Jaguars,
Serpents,
Rattlers,
Yellowmouths,
Guardians of plants.
The Mother said this,
And the Father:
"Should it only be still,
Or should it not be silent
Under the trees
And shrubs?
Indeed, it would be good if there were
Guardians for them," they said,
And when they thought
And talked,
At a stroke there came to be
And were created
Deer
And birds.
Then they awarded homes also to the deer
And birds.
"You, Deer, on the rivers
And in the canyons
Will you sleep then.
There will you be then,

Kehe q'ut u noohixik ri ta x ki noohih,
Ta x ki bizoh
R utzinik,
U banatahik k umal.

260

V

Ta x ki noohih chik
U chikopil huyub,
Chahal r e k'icheelah,*
R onohel u vinaqil huyub:
Ri kieh,*
Tz'ikin,
Koh,
Balam,*
Kumatz,
Zochoh,
Q'an Ti,*
Chahal q'aam.
Ka ch'a ri, Alom,
Q'aholom:
"Xa pa chi lolinik,
Ma xa 'on chi tz'ininik *
U xe chee,
Q'aam?
Kate, utz chi q'ohe
Chahal r e," x e ch'a q'ut.
Ta x ki noohih,
X ki tzihoh puch,
Hu zuq ux,
Vinaqir
Keh,
Tz'ikin.
Ta x ki zipah q'ut r ochoch keh,
Tz'ikin.
"At, keh, pa be ya,
Pa zivan
K at var vi.
Varal k at q'ohe vi

270

280

290

The Quiche sometimes call the puma *meez*, from Nahuatl *miztli*, and use the Hispanicized derivative *mix* for domestic cats.

271. *Q'an tiy* 'yellow bite' is a highly poisonous snake of the lowlands known in Spanish as *boca amarilla*; the name is also applied to the perhaps identical rattlesnake *Trigonocephalus specialis*, and may be related by folk etymology to the old Maya *qan* 'snake'.

276. *Ma* 'not'; all other translations interpret this as *umal* 'so that', which is possible but departs from the text. WC reads both this and the preceding line as negative.

263-4. *Vinaqil* 'population' but also 'spirits, sorts of people'; the animals named are of religious significance. *K'icheelah* 'forest' has several variant spellings in the MS.

265. *Kich* is a relatively modern variant of *keh* 'deer'; the form is rare in the 16th century but common after the 17th. It is probably *Odocoileus toltecus* (Tazzer, 1941, p. 249).

268. There are five wild cats in Central America: the puma, panther, cougar, or mountain lion, *koh* (*Felis concolor*); the jaguar or ounce, *balam* (*Panthera onza*); the ocelot, *?utuy* (*Felis pardalis*); the margay, *yak* (*Felis wiedii*); and the jaguarundi, *?zih* (*Felis yagouaroundi*).

The First Creation

260

In the grass,
In the fruits.
In the wilderness
Will you multiply yourselves then.
On all fours your walk,
Your gait will be,"
They were told,
And then they designated
The homes of the little birds
And the big birds.
"You, oh Birds, in the trees,
In the bushes
Make your homes then,
Make your houses then.
Multiply there then,
Increase then
On the branches of trees,
On the branches of shrubs,"
The deer were told,
And the birds.
When they had done
Their creating,
They gave them everything: their nests
And lairs.
And so the homes
Of the animals were the earth.
They gave it, the Mother
And Father.
There was completed
The assignment
Of all the deer
And birds.

VI

Then also they were told, the deer
And birds
By Former
And Shaper,
The Mother
And Father,
"Talk, then,
Call, then.
Don't warble;
Don't cry.

298. VR read this as *chakubal*, which is unnecessary and breaks the couplet.

308. The MS has *quiritah*.

321-2. The MS has *xutzininaca chic*.

333. FX and SJ read *ma* 'not' but all other transla-

Pa k'im,
Pa zaq'u.
Pa k'icheelah
K i poq'o vi, iv ib.
Kah kah i binibal,
I chakabal ch uxik,*
X e' uch'axik.
300 Ta x ki ch'ik q'ut
K ochoch ch'uti tz'ikin,
Nima tz'ikin.
"Ix, ix tz'ikin, ch u vi chee,
Ch u vi q'aam
K ix ochochin vi,
K ix hayin vi.
Chiri k ix poq' vi,
K ix k'iyaritah vi *
Ch u q'ab chee,
Ch u q'ab q'aam,"
X e' uch'axik keh,
Tz'ikin.
Ta x ki bano
Ki banoh,
R onohel x u qamo: u varabal,
U yakalibal.
Kehe q'ut k ochoch vi
Chikop ri, ulev.
X u yao, Alom,
Q'aholom.
310 X utzininak *
Ka ch'ik
R onohel ri keh,
Tz'ikin.

300

310

320

320

330

330

VI

Ta x e' uch'ax chi q'ut ri keh,
Tz'ikin
R umal Tzakol,
Bitol,
Alom,
Q'aholom,
"K ix ch'av ok.
K ix zik'in ok.
M ix yonolikinik.*
M ix zik'inik.

tors read *mi* 'already'. The latter is not an aspect marker and leaves the verb incomplete. FX has the line read "don't say 'yol, yol,'" but there is no warrant for this; SJ has it 'don't call senselessly'.

Make yourselves understood To each other In each species, In each grouping," The deer were told, And the birds, Panthers, Jaguars, Serpents, (And snakes). "Now then, pronounce Our names. Worship us, your Mother And your Father. Now then, say this: <i>i Leg,</i> <i>Dwarf Lightning,</i> <i>Green Lightning,</i> <i>The Heart of Heaven,</i> <i>The Heart of Earth,</i> <i>Former,</i> <i>Shaper,</i> <i>Mother</i> <i>And Father.</i> Talk then, And call to us. Worship us," They were told. But they did not succeed in talking like men. They just pretended to. They just rattled; And they just croaked. The form of their speech did not emerge. Differently they made cries, each one apart. When Former heard it And Shaper, It is not yet arranged So they can talk," They repeated To each other. "They do not succeed in pronouncing Our names, Although we are their Former And we are their Shaper. It isn't good," they repeated	K ix ch'avahetah Chi huhunal,* Chi hu tak ch'obil, Chi hu tak molahil," X e' uch'axik ri keh, Tz'ikin, Koh, Balam, Kumatz, (Zochob.)* "Ch i biih na q'ut Ri qa bi. K oh i q'aharizah, oh i chuch, Oh i qahav. K i ch'a va na q'ut: <i>Hu r Aqan,</i> <i>Ch'ipi Ka Kulaha,</i> <i>Raxa Ka Kulaha,</i> <i>U K'ux Kah,</i> <i>U K'ux Ulev,</i> <i>Tzakol,</i> <i>Bitol,</i> <i>Alom,</i> <i>Q'aholom.</i> Ch ix ch'a 'ok K oh i zik'ih. K oh i q'ihila,"*	340	340
		350	350
		360	360
		370	370

336. I read *chi'i*.344. Poetically there is a line missing here, probably *zochob*; see line 270.361. VR translate 'we shall hurry to see you' which is both ungrammatical and obscure; the verb *q'ihilah*

'worship' is perfectly clear.

364. *Vachelahik* 'to be putting on an appearance' is an intelligible inflection of *vachih* 'look at'. BB nonetheless translates 'cackle', WC 'hiss', etc., apparently from context alone.

To each other,
They the Mother
And Father.
And they were told,
"Just change yourselves,
Because it is not yet successful
Since you do not speak.
We shall therefore change
Our word.
Your food,
Your nourishment,
Your sleeping places,
Your lairs,
What has been yours
Has now become
The canyons
And the wilderness,
Because our worship has not been achieved;
You do not yet call upon us.
Indeed there is,
Or there should be
A worshipper,
A praiser whom we shall yet make
Who will just take your places,

380 Chi k ibil k ib ri,
Alom,
Q'aholom.
X e' uch'ax q'ut,
"Xa k ix halatahik
R umal ma vi mi x utzinik
Ma vi mi x ix ch'avik.
Mi q'u x qa hal,
Qa tzh.
Iv echa,
I q'uxun,
I varabal,
I yakalibal
R iv ech vi *
Mi x e' uxik
Zivan,
K'icheelah,*
R umal ma vi x utzin qa q'ihiloxik;
Ma vi, ix zik'iy q e.
Q'a q'o,
Q'o vi lo
Q'ihilonel,
Nimanel chi qa ban chik,*
Xa chi qam i patan *

380

390

400

in the Chol Poval, Ahilabal Q'ih, "The Count of the Cycle and the Numbers of the Days."

Other forms of divination were also used extensively by the Quiche. *Hiq' vachinel* 'far seers' were prophet diviners with second sight who could "see at a distance" or scrutinize (*niq'oh*) and peer into (*vachih*) things. *Labahinel* were the diviners of omens, from *labah* 'dream'. Omen diviners are said to have shot arrows against a cliff-face to predict the outcome of the battle with the Spanish under Alvarado. There are also dream diviners (*ichiq'anel*). *Ilol* were seers (*iloh* 'see') who interpreted omens, including the flight of birds. *Ah xulu* 'gleaners' were diagnosticians who specialized in "asking their bodies" divinatory questions, receiving the answers in the twitching and trembling of different members.

403. The concept of 'job (*chak*)' or 'office (*patan*)' is highly developed in Quiche, and is a recurrent theme throughout the Popol Vuh. Gods and men, animals and implements, lords and commoners are continually assigned their duties (which are by implication their functions and their positions in the cosmos): "here is what is yours." Even in modern Quezaltenango and with Indians who no longer speak Quiche we found that the *oficios* of our maids had to be defined (and respected) with the utmost precision. The destruction of the first creation is due to the failure of people in their major office: worship (line 639 ff.). See also lines 747, 1781, 2254, 2351, 2380, 7038, 8279.

393. The MS has *x* for *r*.

396. The MS has *quechelah* here and often elsewhere, just as it often has *queche* for *quiche*.

402. The Quiche concept of priesthood centers on the sun priest or day diviner *ah q'ih* (also called 'arranger of days', *cholol q'ih*; 'day counting', *ahilay q'ih*; 'tz'ite-bean priest', *ah tz'ite*; 'timer', *q'ihibal*; or 'diviner', *q'ihinik*). The diviner was addressed as 'father' (*qahav*, later *tat*), and apparently in a more poetic vein as 'mother and father' (*chuch qahav*), so that modern Chichicastenango uses the term *chuchagav*. Somewhat vaguely, the day diviner is called *zanjorín*, *chimán*, or *brujo* in local Spanish, and all three words have been borrowed by Quiche.

Modern divination is part of a ceremony, held at the diviner's home or at a shrine. After facing east, west, north, and south, he kneels and offers flowers, candles, and incense to the ancestors. Then he spreads a cloth and unwraps the divining bundle containing quartz crystals, chips of obsidian, and other stones, and *tz'ite* beans. About 200 beans are used. A handful is taken and arranged in rows of six or seven piles of four beans each. An odd number in the last pile is a bad omen. Then the beans are counted as days beginning with a relevant date and the divinatory interpretation is taken from the traditional meaning of the day reached on the last pile of beans. If the last pile contains three beans, it is reduced to an even number and an additional "pile" of one bean is added. The count is made from right to left, then left to right, and so sequentially. Details are given in Schultze-Jena, 1933, p. 42 ff. Meanings of the days are sketched

And your flesh will just be eaten.
 So be it then,
 And there may you serve,"
 They were told.
 So they were commanded —
 The little animals
 And big animals who are upon the earth. 410
 And then it was necessary for them to try their luck again.
 It was necessary for them to make another attempt,
 And it was necessary for them to arrange again for worship.
 For they couldn't catch their speech among themselves.
 For it couldn't be understood,
 As it wasn't made that way.
 And so their flesh was humbled.
 They served.
 They were eaten.
 They were killed, 420
 The animals that were here on the face of the earth.
 And so there was another effort
 To form man,
 To shape man
 By the Former
 And Shaper,
 The Mother
 And Father.
 "Let us just try again.
 Already it has approached
 The planting, 430
 The brightening.
 Let us make a supporter for us,
 A nourisher for us.
 How then can we be called upon
 And be remembered upon the earth?
 We have already tried with the first of our formings,
 Our shapings.
 We did not attain our being worshipped
 And being glorified by them. 440

Xa, i tiyohil chi kach'ik.*
 Ta ch ux ok.
 Are q'ut chi patanih,"
 X e' uch'axik.
 Ta x e pixabaxik
 Ch'uti chikop,
 Nima chikop q'o ch u vach ulev. 410
 Ta x r ah q'u ki tih chik ki q'ih.*

X r ah ki tihitobeh chik,
 X r ah pu ki nuk chik q'ihilabal.
 X ma x ki ta vi ki ch'aabal chi k ibil k ib.
 X ma navachir vi q'ut
 X ma x banatah vi puch.
 Kehe q'ut x e ch'akatah vi ki tiyohil.*
 X ki patanih.
 X e tiyik.
 X e kamizaxik, 420
 Ri chikop q'o varal ch u vach ulev.
 Kehe q'ut u tihitobexik chik
 Vinaq tzak,
 Vinaq bit
 K umal Tzakol,
 Bitol,
 Alom,
 Q'aholom.
 "Xa q'u tiha chik.
 Mi x yopih
 R avaxik,* 430
 U zaqirik.
 Qa bana tzuql q e,
 Kool q e.
 Hu pa cha ta k oh zik'ix ok
 Ta k oh nabax puch ch u vach ulev?
 Mi x qa tiho chi r ech ri nabe qa tzak,
 Qa bit
 Ma vi mi x utzinik qa q'ihiloxik *
 Qa q'alahixik puch k umal.* 440

404. *Kach'uh* 'chew' but *qach* 'seize, bite'; it is not clear which verb is intended here; the form is intransitive and the sense of the verb is therefore passive.

411. I know of no warrant for WC's reading of *tih* as 'escape', and the following verb appears to preclude such a reading on poetic grounds.

417-8. WC's rendering of *ch'akatah* as 'offer' is suggestive but not literal; the parallel rendering of *patanih* as 'demon' is equally loose.

431-2. The metaphor of creation as an act of farming is repeated many times (lines 193-4, 205-6, 527-8), but is rejected here by AR because "man had not been created yet nor had agriculture been invented." This is unnecessarily literal. All the translations read *zaqirik* 'whiten' as dawn, which fails to complete the couplet.

439. BB omits *mi*.

440. The MS has *calaxic*.

And so let us try now
 To make
 A praiser,
 A worshipper,
 A supporter,
 A nourisher," they said.
 For then there was the forming
 And the working
 Of earth
 And mud.
 Its body they made,
 But it didn't look good to them.
 It just kept coming apart.
 It was just absorbent.
 It was just soggy;
 It was just damp.
 It was just crumbling
 And it was just dissolving.
 Its head wasn't rounded.
 Its face was just one sided.
 Its eyes were just veiled
 And couldn't be looked into.
 As soon as it spoke
 It made no sense.
 Just all at once it dissolved in the water.
 "It wasn't strong," they said then,
 Former
 And Shaper.
 "It looks wet.
 If it should just get wet
 It couldn't walk
 And it couldn't be made to multiply.
 So be it.
 Its mind is dark there," they said.
 And so they destroyed it.
 They overthrew again
 What they had formed,

Kehe q'ut qa tiha vi
 U banik
 Ah nim,
 Ah xob,*
 Tzuqul,
 Kool," x e ch'a.
 Ta, u tzakik q'ut,
 U banik puch
 Ulev,
 Xoq'ol.
 U tiyohil x ki bano.
 Ma q'ut utz x k ilo.*
 Xa chi yohomanik,
 Xa tzubulik,
 Xa nebelik,*
 Xa lubanik,
 Xa vulanik,*
 Xa pu chiyumarik.*
 Ma vi chi k'olol u holom.*
 Xa hun beenak vi, u vach.
 Xa q'uul u vach,
 Ma vi chi muqun chi r ih.
 Chi ch'av nabek
 Ma ha bi, u naoh.
 Xa hu zuq chiyumar pa ha.
 "Ma vi q'ov," x e ch'a chi q'u ri,*
 Ah Tzak,
 Ah Bit.
 "Ka vach labek.*
 Ta ch ux ok xa labe
 Ma vi chi binik
 Ma pu chi poq'otahik.
 Ta ch ux ok.*
 Xa 'u naoh chiri," x e ch'a.
 Ta x ki yoh q'ut.
 X ki yoq' chik
 Ri ki tzak,

444. *Xob* 'worship' rests on the authority of FX. See, however, lines 1917-8.

452. BB has *ut* for *q'ut*; the MS has *cu*.

455-6. WC interpolates a negative:

It was without movement
 And without strength.

The basis of this reading is unknown to me.

457. *Vulih* 'dismantle'; *a* and *i* are frequently alternated in Quiche dialects. VR read *qul* 'neck' into this line.

458. *Chamurik* 'to be consumed (by fire)'; see line

465. VR read *chi* as 'mouth'.

459-62. The MS reads *mavui chi colol v holo xa humbenacvi v vach*. The interpretation of *k'oloh* as

'move' rests on FX's authority, nowhere confirmed. By reduction from *k'olobah* 'place something round' and *k'olotih* 'curl' I consider the verb to be *k'oloh* 'to round'. I agree with GR, VR, and AR that *hun beenak* is 'one-sided'.

466. Omitted by WC.

469-70. RK translates for some reason:

Let us try again,
 Because this (creature) . . .

WC gives, equally elliptically and obscurely:

It appears that . . .

473-4. Previous translations do not make sense of this couplet. I read *xaq u naoh*.

They had shaped.
 And they said again,
 "What are there that we can make
 That may succeed then,
 That may be intelligent then,
 Worshipping us,
 And calling upon us?" they said.
 Then they thought further
 And just called upon
 Xpiacoc
 And Xmucane,
 Hunter Possum
 And Hunter Coyote.
 "They can try again their divination,
 Their creation," they told each other —
 The Former
 And Shaper.
 And so they spoke to Xpiacoc
 And Xmucane.
 And indeed it was proposed to them,
 The far seers,
 The Grandmother of Day,
 The Grandmother of Light.
 They were addressed by the Former
 And Shaper.
 These are the names of Xpiacoc
 And Xmucane.

VII

And there spoke also
 1 Leg
 With Majesty
 And Quetzal Serpent.
 Then they spoke to the Sun Priest
 And the Shaper, the far seers,
 "It must be sought

Ki bit.
 X e ch'a chi q'ut,*
 480 "Hu pa cha ki q'o chi qa bano * 480
 Ch utzin ta vi,*
 Chi navachir ta vi,
 Q'ihiloy q ech,
 Zik'iy q ech?" x e ch'a.
 Ta x ki naohih chik
 Xa ka biih chi k e
 Xpiacoc,
 Xmucane,
 Hun Ah Pu Vuch',
 490 Hun Ah Pu 'Utv. 490
 "Ki tiha chik u q'ihixik *
 U bitaxik," x e' uch'an ki k ib *
 Ah Tzak,
 Ah Bit.
 Ta x ki biih q'ut chi r e Xpiacoc,
 Xmucane.
 Kate q'ut u biixik chi k ech ri
 E nik' vachinel,*
 R atit q'ih,*
 R atit zaq.
 K e' uch'axik k umal ri Tzakol,
 Bitol.
 Are ki bi ri Xpiacoc,
 Xmucane.

VII

X e ch'a q'u
 Ri Hu r Aqan
 R uq Tepev,
 Q'uq' Kumatz.
 Ta x ki biih chi r ech Ah Q'ih,
 Ah Bit, e nik' vachinel,
 "X u qulu * 510

479-86. These lines are missing from the BX text.

480. SJ has *hupacha quichicabano*; BB has *hu pacha chi ka bano*. Both omit a blurred word which BX and VC read as *q'o*, I believe correctly.481-2. Both lines are omitted by FX; *navachir* is translated 'hatch' by BB and GR, 'create' by WC, 'understand' by SJ, VR, VC, and BX. RK has 'that our idea may be realized'. It is omitted by AR and NP. Telotor's Rabinal vocabulary gives *nayachir* 'understand, multiply', but he may have taken it from one of these sources.491. *Ka* appears to be omitted; the second person plural would seem to be precluded by the reflexive in the following line.492. *Biitaxik* 'being made to be called upon'. The particle *ki* is strange here; perhaps it should read *k i(bil)*.

498. "Far seers" are diviners with second sight.

499-500. *Ri man* 'grandfather' would seem more likely, but the text has it otherwise; see lines 555-6, 5201-2.

511-2. This is unclear and is omitted by BX. Others give:

The diviner arrived
 And joined with it again (FX)
 It is time
 To agree again about the signs (BB, NP, GR)
 That they get together again
 And decide (VR)
 The first thing to do is to find a way
 And to know clearly (SJ)
 We must get together
 And find the means (AR)

And it will just be found
 So that then again we can shape man,
 So that we can form man again then,
 As a supporter
 And nourisher.
 We shall be called upon,
 And we shall be remembered.
 Then there may be support
 In words,
 Ancestress of Grandchildren,
 Ancestor of Grandchildren,
 Our Grandmother,
 Our Grandfather,
 Xpiacoc
 And Xmucane.
 If you plow it
 And it is then planted
 Then it will brighten into
 Our being called upon,
 Our being supported,
 Our being remembered
 By the formed people,
 The shaped people,
 The doll people,
 The made up people.
 Do it then.
 So be it.
 Manifest you
 Your names,
 Hunter Possum,
 Hunter Coyote,
 Grandmother,
 Grandfather,
 Great Pig,
 Great Coati,
 Gemcutter,
 Jeweller,
 Carver,
 Sculptor,

Xa pu ch u riqo
 Ch e ta chik chi qa vinaq bitoh,
 Chi qa vinaq tzakoh ta chik
 Tzuql,
 Kool.
 K oh zik'ix tah
 K oh nabax tah puch.
 Ka toq' ta q'ut *
 520 Pa tzih,
 Iyom,
 Mamom,
 Q Atit,
 Qa Mam,
 Xpiacoc,
 Xmucane.
 Ch a tah ta *
 Ch avax ok
 Ta zaqir ok
 530 Qa zik'ixik,
 Qa toq'exik,*
 Qa nabaxik
 R umal vinaq tzak,
 Vinaq bit,
 Vinaq moy,
 Vinaq anom.
 Ch a ta.
 Ch ux ok.
 Ch i k'utun
 540 I bi,
 Hun Ah Pu Vuch',
 Hun Ah Pu 'Utiv,
 Ka mul Alom,
 Ka mul Q'aholom,
 Nim Aq,
 Nima Tziz,
 Ah Q'uval,
 Ah Yamanik,
 Ah Ch'ut,
 550 Ah Tz'alam,

520 530 540 550

The first thing must be to know clearly

And to find the means (RK)

It is worth having another conference;

It is worth finding the means (WC)

The diviners:

"You amass only power . . . (VC)

Because of its parallelism with *riqoh* 'find', I agree with SJ that the first verb is *quluh* 'choose, find', not *q'uluh* 'meet, marry', and certainly not *uluh* 'arrive, receive'. The inflection of both verbs is utterance terminal, and the pronoun is third person singular. The couplet is re-

peated in lines 587-8, and should perhaps read here as there *xa ch u qulu*.

519. Previous translators read this as *k at ok* 'enter thou'. I think the verb is *toq'eh* 'support', which is repeated in line 531.

527. Most translators read this *ch at ah*, 'wish thou'. I agree with NP and WC that it is *ch a tah* 'plantest thou'. VC has *cha tah* 'let there be'.

531. VR has 'how not to cause them damage', apparently changing the verb to *tokoh* 'wound' and plucking a negative out of thin air.

Green Plate Spirit,	Ah Raxa Laq,*
Blue Bowl Spirit,	Ah Raxa Zel,
Incense Maker,	Ah Q'ol,
Craftsman,	Ah Toltecat,*
Grandmother of Day,	R Atit Q'ih,
Grandmother of Light.	R Atit Zaq.*
Be called upon by what we form,	K ix uch'axik r umal qa tzak,
What we shape.	Qa bit.
Cast with the corn;	Chi mala chi 'ixim;*
With the tz'ite beans operate,	Chi tz'ite xa chi banatahik,*
And it will just come	Xa pu ch el *
To pass	Apan ok *
That we elaborate	Chi q ahah,
And that we chisel out	Chi qa k'otah puch
His mouth	U chi,
And his face for him,"	U vach ch e,"
They declared	X e' uch'axik
To the Sun Priests.	E' Ah Q'ih.
And then indeed was their throwing,	Kate puch u qahik,*
Their divining,	U q'ihiloxik
That they cast with corn	Ri x malik chi 'ixim,
And with tz'ite —	Chi tz'ite
The Sun	Q'ih,*
And Shaper.	Bit.
And then spoke a Grandmother	X e ch'a q'u ri hun atit,
And a Grandfather to them.	Hun mama chi k ech.
There was the Grandfather:	Are ri mama:
He was the tz'ite man.	Are, ah tz'ite.
Xpiacoc was his name.	Xpiacoc u bi.
There was the Grandmother,	Are q'u ri, atit,
Sun Priest,	Ah q'ih,
The Shaper,	Ah bit,
At his feet,	Chi r aqan *
Xmucane was her name.	Xmucane, u bi.
And they said	X e ch'a q'ut
As they began to divine,	Ta x ki tikiba q'ih,*

551-2. FX omits this couplet.

554. There is some disagreement here but the general meaning of *toltecatl* in Nahualt is 'artisan' and fits well enough.

556. These all appear to be synonyms for the far seers.

559. *Zea mays*.

560. *Tz'ite* 'divining beans', the fruit of the *pito tree*, *Erythrina corallodendron*, a red bean. The fruit is poisonous and the bark is a source of yellow dye (Wauchope, 1948, p. 50).

561. WC has 'do it in order to see whether...'

562. BB has *apan ok*, but the MS has *apan oc*, literally 'furthermore'.

569. Literally, 'they were told'.

573-4. GR, SJ, AR, BX, RK, and WC make this coup-

let an expletive, which is possible but obscure. Two other possibilities exist: that the terms are in apposition to corn and *tz'ite* in the preceding couplet, or that they are the joint (but grammatically singular) subject of the verb 'cast'. The latter seems to me the simplest.

583. *Chi r aqan* 'at his feet' is obscure and is generally left untranslated. BX and WC give 'at their feet'. VC reads 'mouth legs: vulva'. GR suggests 'giant opening'. AR gives 'great'. (I do not know the authority for *rakan* 'giant'; see note to line 928.) Rather commonly 'at the feet of' simply means 'near, alongside'.

586. BB says 'at the moment when the sun stood still (at noon)', which ignores the plural pronouns. GR has 'when the divining ceased', which also does. Both of them read the verb as *tigibah* 'stop'. My translation agrees

The First Creation

"Just look around
And just find it,
You say.
Our ear hears
Your speaking
What may have been said.
Just find the wood to be worked
And to be carved
By the Former
And Shaper.
Indeed this will be a nourisher
And supporter
When it is planted then,
When it brightens then.
Oh, Corn,
Oh, Tz'ite,
Oh, Sun,
Oh, Shaper,
Join now
And be coupled,"
They said to the corn
And tz'ite —
The Sun Priest

with FX, AR, BX, RK, NP, and WC. VR split the difference with 'while the sun was rising', but this also ignores the pronoun.

587-8. See lines 511-2. The translation of the two couplets shows little agreement even of each author with himself:

They just join
And get together (FX)
It is time
To agree (BB, GR)
The time is come
To find (the sign of man) (NP)
Just when they meet
They come to an agreement (VR)
One should agree about it,
One should find a way (SJ)
Get together!
Join up! (AR)
Let it be granted,
Let it be achieved then. (BX)
Come together,
Join up with each other. (RK)
Lie together! (WC)
We could just find a way,
We could just agree. (VC)

591-2. BB, GR, and VR interpret this as first person plural, and all translations ignore the inflection (-on) of the second verb.

599. Despite the frequency of this couplet (e.g., lines 431-2), BX unaccountably translate here 'when the darkness shall have passed'. □

"Xa ch u qulu,*
Xa pu ch u riqo,
Ch a biih.
590 Ka ta qa xikin
Ka ch'avik *
Ka tzihon tah.
Xa ch u qulu ri chee ch ahavaxik
Chi k'otox puch
K umal Ah Tzak,
Ah Bit.
Ve, are tzuql,
Kool
Ta chavax ok,*
Ta zaqir ok.
600 At 'ixim,
At tz'ite,
At q'ih,
At bit,
K at chokonik,*
K at taqen tah,"
X ch'a chi r e 'ixim,
Tz'ite,
Q'ih,

590

600

605-6. There is general disagreement here:

Call ye (*chokoh* 'call')
And follow ye (*tageh* 'follow, continue') (FX)
Unite yourselves (*choqoh* 'double, twist')
And couple yourselves one on another (*takeh* 'make love') (BB)
Call,
And climb (on each other) (*aqanik* 'climb') (NP)
Seize yourselves (*chok'eh* 'seize')
Adjust yourselves (for the divination) (*takah* 'adjust') (GR)
Thou with the itch (*choqoh* 'tickle, itch')
And indeed thou with the standing member
(*tak'ah* 'erect') (SJ)
Join together,
Yoke yourselves (AR)
Work ye (*chakuh* 'work')
Continue ye (BX)
Thou embracing the itch of desire,
And thou with the erect phallus (RK)
Thou fire womb! (*ch'okoh* 'sit')
Thou tower member! (WC)
Join thee
And couple thee (VC)

On balance, the AR-BB reading is the only one shared by two translators, the only one that scans as a couplet in Quiche, and the only one that takes no liberties with the text. Lines 605-10 are omitted by VR. WC has an ardent footnote on the sexual implication, but it is unconvincing.

<p>And Shaper. "Blush up yonder, Oh Heart of Heaven, and do not degrade The mouth And face Of Majesty And Quetzal Serpent," They said. And then they spoke the truth: "It is turning out well, this doll Carved of wood. It speaks. Something on earth talks. Then so be it," they said, And as they spoke At a stroke the dolls were made, Carved of wood. They looked like people And they talked like people. There were beings On the face of the earth. They existed; They multiplied. They produced daughters; They produced sons, The dolls, Carved of wood. But they had no hearts And they had no minds. They did not remember their Former And their Shaper. In vain they walked And crawled around. They did not again recall him who is the Heart of Heaven And so they fell there. It was just a preliminary effort, And it was just a demonstration person. </p>	<p>610 Bit. "K at q'ix la, ulok,* At u K'ux Kah, ma q'ahizah U chi, U vach Tepev, Q'uq' Kumatz," X e ch'a. Ta x ki biih q'ut u zuqulikil,* "Utz are ch uxik ri poy" Aham chee. Chi ch'avik. Chi tzihon ba la ch u vach ulev. Ta ch ux ok," x e ch'a q'ut.* Ta x ki biih Hu zuq x banik poy, Aham chee. X e vinaq vachinik X e vinaq tzihonik puch. Are vinaqil U vach ulev. X e' uxik, X e poq'ik. X e mealanik, X e q'aholanik Ri poy, Aham chee. Ma q'u ha bi ki k'ux, Ma pu ha bi ki naoh. Ma vi natal k Ah Tzak, K Ah Bit. Xa loq' x e binik, X e chakanik. Ma vi x ki natah chik ri 'u K'ux Kah, </p>	<p>610 620 630 640 640</p>
		corn and the tz'ite but the text does not say so and the assumption is unnecessary. Direct discourse is usually plainly indicated in the text.

611-2. BX have 'bless us from up there', VC 'thou sacrificer come', GR 'come and prick (the corn) there', RK 'produce and bring hither the blood sacrifice', and WC 'look away in shame', none of which completes the couplet. I believe the sense of the passage is negative magic—an implication of failure to ward off the evil eye that comes from success. The "truth" is given in line 619 ff. Compare also lines 2477 ff. BB and GR read *K'abizah* as 'kiss' for some reason.

618. *Zuqulikil* 'truth' is translated 'maintainer' by VR.

619. FX interprets these lines as being spoken by the

623-4. FX omits these lines. SJ and RK have them as a separate quotation from those preceding: "So be it," answered (the creator gods).*

644. FX reads this 'beaks'. BX have *chi vi* for *chiri*.

646. FX and BX interpret this as 'stand up'; I believe the verb is *vabah* 'prepare, present'. VR's translation is fanciful: 'with a mouth to eat with'. Lines 645-6 are omitted by WC.

The First Creation

They spoke all right,
But their faces were dry.
Their legs were not filled out,
Nor their arms.
They lacked blood
And serum.
They lacked sweat
And fat.
Dry (their) cheeks
And masks (were) their faces.
They jerked their legs
And their arms.
One destroyed their bodies
Because they didn't know anything besides
Before Former
And Shaper,
The Bearers of them,
The Hearteners of them.
They were the first numerous people
Who came to be here on earth.

VIII

And so in fact they were finished off again.
They were destroyed
And they were broken up
And killed again,
The dolls
Carved of wood.
Then their flood was invented by the heart of
Heaven.

647. *Nabek* is unknown to me. FX and VR omit it. It is generally read as *nabe* 'at first'. SJ renders it 'indeed (*zwar*)', apparently reading it as *labe*. This seems the best fit.

648-9. I know of nothing to justify WC's reading of *xa chaqih* as 'motionless' or *zonol* as 'strength'. His translation of the following eight lines is very loose. Girard (1952, p. 49) quotes a parallel passage from the Book of Chilam Balam of Chumayel:

On 13 Night
It happened
That God took water
And wet earth
And fashioned the body
Of man.
On 1 Net
It happened
That his heart broke
Over the bad thing he had created.
On 2 Snake
It happened
That the bad thing appeared
And was seen in the eyes of the people.

K e ch'av nabek,*
Xa chaqih ki vach.*
Ma na zonol k aqan,
Ki q'ab;
Ma ha bi ki kiq'el,
Ki komahil;
Ma ha bi ki tikoval,*
Ki q'ab ch'iyal.
Chaqih q'ootz;
K'oh ki vach.*
Ka pichipoh k aqan,*
Ki q'ab.
Ka yeoh ki tiyohil
Kehe q'ut ma vi x e nav chir.*
Ch u vach Tzakol,
Bitol,
Alay k ech,
K'uxilay k ech.
E nabe tzatz chi vinaq
X e' uxik varal ch u vach ulev.

VIII

Kate q'ut ki k'izik chik,
Ki mayixik,
Ki qutuzik puch,
X e kamizax chik
Poy
Aham chee.
Ta x nohix ki butik r umal u K'ux Kah.*

653-4. VR translate erratically 'nor intestines to hold their food nor limbs to defend themselves', but the lines are perfectly clear.

656. *K'oh* 'mask' is SJ's interpretation; others apparently read *q'ooh* 'be'.

657-60. FX reads *pichipoh* and *yeoh* as color intensifiers (which is plausible but elsewhere unconfirmed) and interprets the *ka* preceding them as *q'an* 'yellow'. I find no reason for translating *pichipoh* as 'dry' (BB, NP, GR, AR, RK, WC, VC) or 'misshapen' (SJ). BX's reading 'stiffened' may relate to *pichipob* 'jump'. SJ reads *ka yeoh* as an intensive form of *q'ayih* 'rot'. I do not know the grounds for BB's 'languishing', GR's and VC's 'compressed', VR's 'distinguished from' or BX's 'lifeless', but none of these fits the couplet. I read it *ka 'e yoh*, which also fails to fit the couplet but fits the sense: *yohoh* 'disturb, fight, destroy' is a common Quiche verb.

660. BX have correctly read *chiri* for the *chi vi* of the other texts.

673. Like most of the translators, I read this as

A great flood was made, and descended on the heads	Nima butik x banik, x pe pa ki vi ri,
Of those who were dolls Who were carved of wood.	E poy, E' ah am chee.
Of tz'ite was the body of the man When he was carved	Tz'ite, u, tiyohil ri 'achiy Ta x ahaxik
By Former And Shaper.	R umal Tzakol, Bitol,
Woman reed was the body of the woman Who was carved	Ixoq zibak q'ut u tiyohil ixoq *
By Former And Shaper.	X r ah okik *
They did not think, And they did not speak	R umal Tzakol, Bitol.
Before their Former, Their Shaper,	Ma vi x e navik,
The Maker of them, The Creator of them,	Ma pu x e ch'avik
And so they were killed; They were overwhelmed.	Ch u vach k Ah Tzak, K Ah Bit,
There came a great rain of glue Down from the sky.	Banol k e,
There came the Rippers of Eyes, as they are called, And tore their eyes from their sockets.	Vinaqirizay k ech.
There came Killer Bats And snatched off their heads.	Kehe q'ut ki kamizaxik. X e butik.
There came Lurking Jaguar And ate their flesh.	X pe nima q'ol *
There came Aroused Jaguar	Chila chi kah.
680	
690	
700	
690	
700	

naohih 'decide' rather than (*o*)*nohik* 'fill', as BB and GR have it. The translation of *butik* 'flood' rests on the authority of Las Casas; see AR, p. 97.

681. *Zibak* is the cattail or bulrush (*Typha angustifolia*) used for matting. Real men were later made of white and yellow corn; see line 4815 ff.

682. BX have *x r ahazik*, which is probably correct, though the MS has it otherwise.

693. *Q'ol* 'resin, incense, glue' is left untranslated by SJ. WC interprets it as lava.

695. This line should perhaps read *x e pe q'otoq'ol vach u bi*. Only BX translate the plural pronoun, and only NP ('hollower of eyes') and GR ('carver of faces') translate the name. FX, BB, and AR identify it as a bird. VR footnote a fanciful etymology 'the eagle dominating existence'. WC gives 'ruling owl', though correctly translating the name in a footnote.

696. The subject of the verb is singular, despite the apparent plural in the preceding line, a recurrent looseness in Quiche syntax, where things seem to slip back and forth between being considered collectively and individually; the effect here is to make the verb dependent on the preceding one: 'they came to tear out . . .' For

what appears to be an illustration of this demon see Barthel, 1966, pp. 102-3. He specifically mentions "ripping of eyes" in his description (*ibid.*, p. 104). Cf. also note to line 5446.

697. Only BX and VC identify the plural pronoun again, and all translations treat *Kamalots* as a proper name. WC, GR, and AR read *Kama Zotz'* and translate 'death bat'. VR have 'the funeral exterminators' and VC sticks to it. See line 3948. Like English, Quiche does not differentiate particular species of Chiroptera.

699. BX cling to the plural but the implication here is singular. *Kotz' Balam* is rendered 'creaking jaguar' (NP), 'turkey magician' (GR), 'unlucky jaguar' (VR), 'rapacious bat' (WC), and 'jaguar in ambush' (AR). The latter translation depends on the commonest word and seems the most likely.

701. *Tukum Balam* is translated 'owl magician' (GR), 'tiger that digs like a rabbit' (VR), 'digging tiger' (VC), and 'tapir' (AR, WC). It is more likely that it should be related to *tukuvik* in the following line and to the preceding epithet for the jaguar, and I have so translated it. The verb is *tukuh* 'move, stir, rotate, whip, break'.

The First Creation

And tore them open,
And shattered their bones
And their cartilage.
Ground up,
Crumbled fine
Were their bones.
The grinding up of their faces was
Because they didn't think before their Mother
And before their Father,
The Heart of Heaven,
i Leg by name.
By them the face of the earth was darkened
And there began a rain of darkness,
Daytime rain
And nighttime rain.
There came out the little animals,
And the big animals.
Their faces were abused by the trees
And rocks.
And there spoke up all their jars,
Their griddles,
Their plates,
Their pots,
Their dogs,
Their mortars —
However many things —
Everything

707. Line omitted by BB.

709-10. WC's reading here is very strange:
And that happened in the battle that they
had planned against their father
And mother,
Not the Heart of Heaven
Whose name is i Leg.

This is fanciful and distorted.

719. GR, VR, and VC have *k'utuh* 'show, manifest'.
The other translators have read *q'utuh* 'mistreat', which
seems required by the instrumental *r umal*.721. The Quiche classify containers (*xun*) as pots
(*booh*), gourds (*'ak*), and baskets or nets (*yal*, *zuk*).
The principal forms of Quiche pottery go back at least
to the 6th century at Zacualpa: dishes (*laq*), bowls
(*tsel*), and jars (*mulul*) (Wauchope, 1948, p. 105), and
censers (*kukub*) (*ibid.*, pp. 116-9). Large jars (*hul*,
huk) date at least to the 9th century (*ibid.*, p. 121),
pitchers (*q'eb*) and *pichacha* collanders (*ix ch'ob*) to the
13th (*ibid.*, pp. 104, 151). Funerary urns (*?och*) date
from the 15th century (*ibid.*, p. 156) and so, very likely,
do the large bowls for covering the smoke holes on tops
of houses (*kukuruch*) and the griddles (*rot*) used for
tortillas, though the latter items remain undocumented
in Quiche archaeology. The Quiche classify their
pottery by use as well as by form, thus specifying vessels for
drinking (*uqqabal*), steaming (*zaabal*), sifting (*keyabal*).

X tukuvik.
X kichovik ki baql,
K ibochil.
X q'ahixik,
X muchulixik
Ki baql,*
Q'ahizabal ki vach
R umal ma vi ki navik ch u vach ki chuch,*
Ch u vach puch ki qahav ri,
U K'ux Kah,
Hu r Aqan u bi.
K umal x q'equmarik u vach ulev.
X tikarik q'eqal hab,
Q'ihil hab,
'Aqabal hab.
X ok ula ch'uti chikop,
Nima chikop.
X qut ki vach r umal chee,*
Abah.
X ch'avik r onohel ki q'ebal,*
Ki xot,*
Ki laq,
Ki booh,
Ki tz'i,* (ver pag. 83)
Ki kaa —
Ha ruh pa la
R onohel

710

720

smoking (*bukubal*), etc. Such words are readily coined
in Quiche and probably have little ethnotaxonomic
stability.Gourd containers include cups (*kup*, *q'ox*), dippers
(*t'uy*), and water jars (*tzima*, *tol*), and some of these,
notably the small pitcher or dipper (*t'uy*), are reproduced
in ceramic form. They may be further qualified by ad-
jectives, e.g., a wide-mouthed (*cherechik*) cup.Basketry and net and fiber containers include baskets
(*chakach*), nets (*k'at*), fishnets (*zihib*), carrying nets
(*chuy*), and bags (*chin*). There is also the wooden
carrying rack (*kok*), and the gourd-carrying tray
(*kubul*). Chests and boxes are named for their functions
in "saving" and "protecting" things (*qibal*, *kuvibal*).722. The word *xot* is specifically the griddle on
which *tortillas* are made (Nahuatl *comalli*), which to
my mind settles the question of whether these traits are
aboriginal in the Guatemalan highlands (cf. Borhegyi,
1965, p. 55). It must be admitted, however, that *tortillas*
(*leh*) are not mentioned in the Popol Vuh.725-6. BB, NP, GR, and VR read *ki 'ak'* 'their
chickens (turkeys)'. The poetic scansion is also obscure
here. Cf. lines 733-5, where 'dog' is parallel to 'chicken'
and followed by 'grindstone'. Zoomorphic grindstones
are found southward from Mayan territory into northern
South America.

Abused their faces.		X qutu ki vach. *	
“Pain you have caused us.	730	“Q’ax x i ban chi q e.	730
You have eaten us,		X oh i tiyo,	
And now we are going to eat you back,”		Ix chi q’ut x k ix qa ti chik,”	
Said their dogs		X ch’ a ri ki tz’i,	
And their chickens to them.		K ak’ chi k ech.*	
And then the grindstones:		Are q’u ri kaa:	
“We have been shattered by you		“X oh qoq’onik iv umal,	
Every day —		Hu tak q’ih —	
Every day —		Hu tak q’ih —	
Night and day,		X q’eq zaqirik,	
All the time —	740	Amaq’el —	740
Crunch!		Holi!*	
Crunch!		Holi!	
Scrape!		Huk’i!	
Scrape!		Huk’i!	
On our faces		Qa vach	
You went.		Iv umal.	
If that was formerly our service to you		Are ta nabe qa patan ch i vach *	
When you were people		Ix ta na vinaq,*	
Then you can now try		Vakamik q’ut x ch i tih	
Our strength.	750	Qa chuq’ab.	750
We shall grind up		X chi qa keeh,	
And we shall scrape your flesh,”		X chi qa hoq’ puch i tiyohil,”	
Their grindstones said to them.		X ch’ a ri ki kaa chi k e.	
And then it was their dogs		Are q’u ri ki tz’i	
That said further		X ch’ a chik	
When they spoke:		Ta x ch’ avik,	
“Why was it that you didn’t give us our food?		“Naki pa r umal ma vi chi ya qa va?	
We just looked on, and you just ate us up.		X k oh muqunik, xa pu k oh i kuxih ulok.*	

729. See note to line 719. Only GR and VC cling to *k’utuh* here, but ‘mistreat, abuse’ is poetically required. BX interpret the verb passively ‘everything which had been mistreated’. I read *rub* for *ruh*; the MS is not clear.

734. It is not clear what the “chickens” of the 15th-century Quiche may have been. Turkeys (*Meleagris ocellata*) are known to have been domesticated; a “partridge-like” wood rail (*Aramides* spp. or *Tinamous* spp.) was raised in captivity in Yucatan (Tozzer, 1941, p. 201). Perhaps this is the Quiche *beni’ak’*. Other gallinaceous birds of Central America are the pheasant or *qohom’ak’* (*Crax globicera*) and quail or *’ak’ huyub* (*Eupsychortex nigrolaris*). All in all, the turkey is the best bet, though there are other words for ‘turkey’ in Quiche (*kutz, nooz, chuvi*). The turkey was called *’ak’ zo* in the 18th century and is sometimes referred to as the ‘true chicken (*k’az tzih ’ak’*)’. The Quiche also had a ‘short-legged’ chicken called *benebik* and a wild chicken called *buk*.

741-4. The suffix *-i* is anomalous and may be specific to this onomatopoeic usage; *hol* refers to the gobbling of a turkey; *hukuh* is ‘scrape’. GR translates ‘strip, strip, tear, tear’ but other translators leave the words in Quiche.

747. See note to line 403.

748. There is some variation in the interpretation of this line: VR omit it; FX has ‘had you been well disposed, but you were not (*y fuerais bien quistos y pues no lo fuisteis*)’; BB, GR, VR, AR, and WC render it negatively ‘now that you have ceased to be men’; SJ has ‘now then ye shall be the men who . . . (*jetzt endlich werdet Ihr Menschen unsere Macht zu spüren bekommen*)’; and BX give ‘so now you people. . . ’ A literal translation would be ‘ye when still people’; the phrase is grammatically and poetically an amplification of the preceding line rather than an introduction to the following one.

758. Dogs were raised to be eaten and sacrificed among the preconquest Maya; although the modern Quiche make pets of them, they are not well cared for and are often treated with casual cruelty. There were at least two major types of dogs among the pre-Columbian Aztec: a large white humped mastiff (*itzcuintepotzoli*) and a smaller hairless breed (*xoloitzcuintli*). They may have been different species (Termer, 1957). The Quiche do not appear to have distinguished them.

Whether we lay down here
Or got up there
We were beaten by you
While you ate.
You just used to lecture us then;
We couldn't talk,
And we got nothing from you
Unless you didn't know about it,
And then when you found out later,
Then we were lost.
So now you can try
Our bones
That are in our mouths:
We shall eat you,"
Their dogs said to them,
And their face was destroyed.
And so their griddles
And their pots spoke further to them:
"Pain it was
You inflicted on us.

759-60. The MS has *pi* for *puch* and *ubi* for *ubik*. SJ interprets the first verb as *tzakoh* 'create, make' (both he and BB read it *cohizac*), and interprets *yakal ubik* 'lies its meaning'. VR omit the first verb and read the latter expression 'we stood before you', which is not grammatically possible; the other translators read the verb as *tzakah* 'throw, drop', which is textual, and apparently agree with my reading of *yakal ubik* 'standing there' but interpret it as 'provided, ready'. (Or they may relate it to *yakoh* 'prepare', which assumes a modified text.) WC has 'you just chased us from your side and chased us out with a stick at your side'.

762. BB has *ta x k ix vaik*.

765-8. Every man for himself:

Perhaps ye would not be dying now;
Why didn't ye take care of yourselves?
Thus we were lost. (FX)
Otherwise we wouldn't have (put you to) death
now.
Why didn't you think?
Why didn't you consider yourselves?
It is we who shall destroy you. (BB, NP, GR)
Why shouldn't we kill you now?
Why didn't you feel and foresee this?
Why didn't you understand
What was about to befall you? (VR)
Weren't we to be thus slaughtered if it had been
up to you?
How could you be so thoughtless?
Had you not thought of your safety (of us as
guardians),
We should have been lost. (SJ)
Perhaps we should not kill you now,
But why didn't you think about it?
Why didn't you think of yourselves?

K oh tzak puch ulok,*
Yakal ubik,
Qa cheel iv umal
Ta k ix vaik.*
Xere k oh iv uch'ah vi;
Ma vi k oh ch'avik.
Ma ta q' mi x oh qamik ch iv e *
Hu pa cha ma vi mi x ix navik.
X ix nav ta q'ut
Ch iv ih ta q'ut x oh zach vi.
Vakamik q'ut x ch i tih
Qa baq
Q'o pa qa chi.
X k ix qa tiyo,"
X e ch'a ri tz'i chi k e,
Ta x qut ki vach.
Are chi q'u ri ki xot,
Ki booh x ch'av chik chi k e,
"Q'ax va *
X i ban chi q e.

760

770

Now we shall destroy you. (AR)
And even then we did not die before you.
Because you did not have intelligence.
If you had been understanding
We should have perished, being with you. (BX)
Wouldn't we be rotting then if you had your
way?
Why didn't you look ahead?
Why didn't you think of yourselves?
Now we shall destroy you. (RK)
Perhaps we would not be killing you now.
But why didn't you think about it?
And why didn't you go on your own?
Therefore we shall destroy you now. (WC)
Don't we then have to kill you?
Why didn't you understand?
Or think? Then we then
Shall destroy you. (VC)

I think the reading *kamik* 'die' is wrong, but even were it correct the subject is clearly 'we' and the form intransitive. The negative stands too early in the adverbial complex to negate the verb. Thus the FX, BB, NP, GR, VR, AR, and WC translations are not possible. Several of the difficulties evaporate if the verb is read as *qamoh* 'receive'. None of the translations deals with *chi r ih*. The final verb is a real problem (*zachah* 'lose, pardon, forgive, forget' or *zachoh* 'destroy, mistreat, waste?'), but there is no particular reason to give it an object or even to read it as active. There is no ground for the negative in SJ's or WC's rendering of line 768. None of the translations scans poetically, though the BX comes close and is also clearer than the others.

777. BX have *va*, I believe correctly; BB, SJ, and VC have *ra*; VR have *rii*.

Sooty our mouths —
 Sooty our faces.
 Always we were dumped on the fire.
 You burned us.
 We felt no pain, so you try it.
 We shall burn you,"
 Said all their pots,
 And their face was destroyed.
 And there were (their) rocks,
 And their hearthstones
 Stretched
 And came from the fire,
 Pounding on their heads
 And hurting them.
 They tried to run away.
 They were forced to scatter completely then.
 They tried to climb on the houses,
 But the houses collapsed and down they fell.
 They tried to climb the trees:
 They were thrown off by the trees.
 They tried to crawl in the holes,
 But the holes closed in their faces. 800
 And thus was the destruction of the formed people,
 The shaped people.
 They were destroyed.
 They were overthrown as people.
 They destroyed,
 They crushed
 Their mouths,
 Their faces entirely.
 And it is said that the remainder
 Are the monkeys that are in the forests today. 810
 That must be the remainder

Xaq qa chi —
 Xaq qa vach.
 Amaq'el oh tzakal ch u vi q'aq'.* 780
 K oh i k'ato.
 Ma vi q'ax x qa nao, x ch i tih q'ut.*
 X k ix qa poroh,"
 X ch'a ri ki booh r onohel,
 X qutu ki vach.
 Are ri (k) abah,*
 Ri k ix k'ub *
 Chi taninik,*
 Chi pe pa q'aq'.* 790
 T'akal chi ki holom,
 Q'ax x ban chi k e.
 Anilabik,
 K e malamatilab chik.*
 Ke r ah aqanik ch u vi haa,*
 Xa chi vulih haa, k e tzak ulok.
 Ke r ah aqanik ch u vi chee,*
 K e chaqix ulok r umal chee.*
 Ke r ah ok pa hul,
 Xa chi yuch hul chi ki vach.* 800
 Kehe q'ut u kayohik vinaq tzak,*
 Vinak bit,
 E tzixel,
 E tzalatzoxel chi vinaq.*
 X mayixik,*
 X qutuxik
 Ki chi,
 Ki vach k onohel.
 X ch'a q'ut are r etal
 Ri q'oy q'o pa k'icheelah vakamik.* 810
 Are x q'ohé vi r etal

781. FX and VR read *tzakoh* 'cook, make' for *tzakah* 'drop, fall'.

783. The negative is ignored by FX and VR.

787. The MS omits *k*.

788. The three-stone hearth.

789. The verb is *tanih* 'stretch'. FX, BB, and GR apparently read it *anih* 'run'; WC has 'fly'; and VC somehow reads *ta ninik* 'then enraged'.

790. BB has *hi* for *chi*.

794. The verb is *malah* 'scatter'; the form is intensive (-am-), causative (-at-), active (-il-), purposive (-ab-). The intransitive suffix (-ik) would normally be expected as in the preceding line but is omitted. BB has *malmalihab*; SJ and VC have *malihab*.

795-800. The couplet structure is intensified here, scanning *ab, ab, ab* instead of the usual *aa, bb, cc*.

797. BB has *aqani*.

798. The MS has *r uma*.

800. *Hul* has been misread as *hal*.

801. *Kayoh* is unknown to me; all translators have apparently read *kayih* 'ruin, destroy, scatter'.

804. This is an unusual use of the particle *chi*.

805-8. The grammar is somewhat distorted in the translation to keep the correspondence of the lines. More literally:

It was destroyed;
 It was crushed—
 Their mouth,
 Their face of them all.

The singular face possessed by plural people is normal in Quiche usage.

810. Guatemala has two kinds of monkeys: the spider monkey (*Ateles vellerosus*, *A. geoffroyi*, or *Mycetes villosus*) and the howler monkey (*Alouatta spp.*). In Spanish they are called *monos* and *meicos*, in Quiche *q'oy* and *baatz'* (or *choven*), respectively.

30 Gente de palo = ? Saragras?
 Don Batz' y Don Choven = ? Monos
 (ver p. 89 para los monos araña)
 Araña?



The First Creation

Because their bodies were only fixed of wood
By Former
And Shaper.
So the fact that the monkeys
Look like people
Is a sign of one generation of formed people,
Of shaped people,
Only puppets
And just carved of wood.

820

R umal xa chee ki tiyohil x kohik
R umal Ah Tzak,
Ah Bit.
Are q'u ri q'oy
Kehe ri vinaq chi vachinik
R etal hu le vinaq tzak,
Vinaq bit,
Xa poy,
Xa puch aham chee.*

820

820. This is the end of the first creation. (The MS has *pu* for *puch*.) The peculiarities of NP's treatment of the text may be illustrated here. He follows line 820 with lines 867-70. Then come lines 821-64 followed by

925-56, 871-96, 899-907, and 897-924 (consequently repeating part of the text and clarifying nothing). In spots it is even more mysterious.

1. *Atelos vellerosus* = *Mono araña* = *q'oy*

2. *Alouatta spp.* = *Mono aullador o Saraguato* = *batz' o chauen*